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V I E W
O F
SOCIETY AND MANNERS
I N
I T A L Y.
V O L. II.



A
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SOCIETY AND MANNERS
I N
I T A L Y:

W I T H
A N E C D O T E S

RELATING TO SOME
EMINENT CHARACTERS.
By JOHN MOORE, M.D.
IN THREE VOLUMES.

V O L. II.

Strenua nos exercet inertia: navibus atque
Quadrigis petimus bene vivere. Quod petis, hic est.
HOR.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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Joshua Minnott 1790.

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LETTER XXXIII.

Loretto.

PILGRIMAGES to Loretto are not so frequent with foreigners, or with Italians of fortune and distinction, as formerly, nineteen out of twenty of those, who make this journey now, are poor people, who depend for their maintenance on the charity they receive on the road. To those who are of such a rank in life as precludes them from availing themselves of the charitable institutions for the maintenance of pilgrims, such journies are attended with expence and inconveniency; and I am informed, that fathers and husbands, in mode-

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rate or confined circumstances, are frequently brought to disagreeable dilemmas, by the rash vows of going to Loretto, which their wives or daughters are apt to make on any supposed deliverance from danger. To refuse, is considered, by the whole neighbourhood, as cruel, and even impious; and to grant, is often highly distressing, particularly to such husbands as, from affection, or any other motive, do not choose that their wives should be long out of their sight. But the poor, who are maintained during their whole journey, and have nothing more than a bare maintenance to expect from their labour at home, to them a journey to Loretto is a party of pleasure, as well as devotion, and by much the most agreeable road they can take to heaven. This being a year of jubilee, there is a far greater concourse of pilgrims of all ranks here, at present, than is usual. We have seen a few in their carriages, a greater number on horseback, or on mules; or, what is still more common, on asses. Great numbers of females come in this manner, with a male friend walking by them, as their guide and protector; but the greatest number, of both sexes, are on foot. When we approached near Loretto, the road was crowded with them: they generally set out before sun-rise; and, having reposed themselves during the heat of the day, continue their journey again in the evening. They sing their matins, and their evening hymns, aloud. As many have fine

voices and delicate ears, those vocal concerts have a charming effect at a little distance. During the stillness of the morning and the evening, we were serenaded with this solemn religious music for a considerable part of the road. The pilgrims on foot, as soon as they enter the suburbs, begin a hymn in honour of the Virgin, which they continue till they reach the church. The poorer sort are received into an hospital, where they have bed and board for three days.

The only trade of Loretto consists of rosaries, crucifixes, little Madonnas, Agnus Dei's, and medals, which are manufactured here, and sold to pilgrims. There are great numbers of shops full of these commodities, some of them of a high price ; but infinitely the greater part are adapted to the purses of the buyers, and sold for a mere trifle. The evident poverty of those manufacturers and traders, and of the inhabitants of this town in general, is a sufficient proof that the reputation of our Lady of Loretto is greatly on the decline.

In the great church, which contains the Holy Chapel, are confessionals, where the penitents from every country of Europe may be confessed in their own language, priests being always in waiting for that purpose : each of them has a long white rod in his hand, with which he touches the heads of those to whom

he thinks it proper to give absolution. They place themselves on their knees, in groupes, around the confessional chair ; and when the Holy Father has touched their heads with the expiatory rod, they retire, freed from the burden of their sins, and with renewed courage to begin a fresh account.

In the spacious area before this church, there is an elegant marble fountain, supplied with water from an adjoining hill, by an aqueduct. Few even of the most inconsiderable towns of Italy are without the useful ornament of a public fountain. The embellishments of sculpture and architecture are employed, with great propriety, on such works, which are continually in the people's view ; the air is refreshed, and the eye delighted, by the streams of water they pour forth ; a sight peculiarly agreeable in a warm climate. In this area there is also a statue of Sixtus V. in bronze. Over the portal of the church itself, is a statue of the Virgin ; and above the middle gate, is a Latin inscription, importing, that within is the House of the Mother of God, in which the Word was made flesh. The gates of the church are likewise of bronze, embellished with basso relievos, of admirable workmanship ; the subjects taken partly from the Old, and partly from the New, Testament, and divided into different compartments. As the gates of this church are shut at noon, the

pilgrims who arrive after that time can get no nearer the Santa Casa than these gates, which are, by this means, sometimes exposed to the first violence of that holy ardour which was designed for the Chapel itself. All the sculpture upon the gates, which is within reach of the mouths of those zealots, is, in some degree, effaced by their kisses. The murder of Abel, by his brother, is upon a level with the lips of a person of an ordinary size, when kneeling. Poor Abel has been always unfortunate; had he been placed a foot higher, or lower, on the gate, he might have remained there, in security, for ages; but, in the unlucky place that the sculptor has put him, his whole body has been almost entirely kissed away by the pilgrims; whilst Cain stands, untouched, in his original altitude, frowning and fierce as ever.

I have said nothing of the paintings to be seen here, though some are highly esteemed, particularly two in the Treasury. The subject of one of these is, the Virgin's Nativity, by Annibale Carracci; and of the other, a Holy Family, by Raphael. There are some others of considerable merit, which ornament the altars of the great church. These altars, or little chapels, of which this fabric contains a great number, are lined with marble, and embellished by sculpture; but nothing within this church interested me so much as the iron

grates before those chapels, after I was informed that they were made of the fetters and chains of the Christian slaves, who were freed from bondage by the glorious victory of Lepanto. From that moment these iron grates commanded my attention more than all the golden lamps and candlesticks, and angels and jewels, of the Holy Chapel.

The ideas that rush into one's mind on hearing a circumstance of this kind, are affecting beyond expression. To think of four thousand of our fellow-creatures, torn from the service of their country and the arms of friendship, chained to oars, subjected continually to the revilings of enemies, and every kind of ignominious treatment, at once, when their souls were sinking under the weight of such accumulated calamity, and brought to the very verge of despair ; at once, in one blessed moment, freed from slavery, restored to the embraces of their friends, and enjoying, with them, all the rapture of victory. Good God, what a scene ! what a number of scenes ! for the imagination, after glancing at the whole, distinguishes and separates objects, and forms a thousand groupes of the most pathetic kind ; the fond recognition of old companions, brothers flying into each other's arms, and the ecstasy of fathers on the recovery of their lost sons. Many such pictures did my fancy form, while I stood contemplating those grates so truly ornamental of a Christian church, and so perfectly congenial

with a religion which requires men to *relieve the oppressed, and set the captive free.*

Happy if the followers of that religion had always observed this divine admonition. I speak not of those men who assume the name of Christians for the purposes of interest or ambition, but of a more absurd class of mankind; those who, believing in Christianity, endeavour to reconcile it to a conduct, and doctrines, entirely repugnant to its nature. This absurdity has appeared in the human character from the earliest ages of Christianity. Men have displayed unaffected zeal, and endeavoured to support and propagate the most benevolent and rational of all religions, by actions worthy of demons, and arguments which shock common sense.

The same persons who praised and admired the heavenly benevolence of this sentiment, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy; have thought it a duty to condemn their fellow-creatures to cruel deaths for speculative opinions. The same men who admired the founder of Christianity for going about, continually doing good, have thought it a duty to spend their whole lives in cells, doing nothing.

And can any thing be more opposite to those dark and inexplicable doctrines, on the belief

of which, according to the conviction of many, our salvation depends, than this plain rule, Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them? a rule so plain, as to be understood by the most simple and ignorant; and so just, complete, and comprehensive, as to be admired by the wisest and most learned.

If this equitable maxim is the law and the prophets, and we learn from the highest authority that it is, what becomes of all those mysterious webs, of various texture, which, since the beginning of the Christian æra, Popes, Priests, and many of the leaders of sectaries, have wove around it?

LETTER XXXIV.

Spoletto.

WE left Loretto after dinner, and proceeded through a beautiful country to Macerata, a small town, situated on a hill, as the towns in Italy generally are. We only stayed to change horses, and continued our journey to Tolentino; where, not thinking it expedient to begin to ascend the Apennines in the dark, we took up our quarters at an inn, the best in the place, but, by many degrees, the poorest we had seen in Italy. However, as it was not for good eating or convenient bedchambers we came to this country, that circumstance affected us very little. Indeed, the quantity of victuals presented us at supper, would have been as displeasing to a person of Sancho's way of thinking, on the subject of eating, as the manner they were dressed would have been to a nicer sensualist in that refined science. The latter circumstance prevented our regretting the former; and although we had felt some uneasiness when we were told how little provisions there were in the house, the moment they appeared on the table we were all convinced there were more than enough.

The poor people of this inn, however, shewed the utmost desire to please. *They* must have unfortunate tempers indeed, who, observing this, could have shocked them by fretfulness, or an air of dissatisfaction. Besides, if the entertainment had been still more homely, even those travellers who are accustomed to the greatest delicacies, might be induced to bear it with patience for one night, from this consideration, That the people of the place, who have just as good a natural right to the luxuries of life as themselves, are obliged to bear it always. Nothing is more apt to raise indignation, than to behold men repining and fretting, on account of little inconveniencies, in the hearing of those who are bearing much greater every day with cheerfulness. There is a want of sense, as well as a want of temper, in such behaviour. The only use of complaining of hardships to those who cannot relieve them, must be to obtain sympathy; but if those to whom they complain, are suffering the same hardships in a greater degree, what sympathy can those repiners expect? They certainly find none.

Next morning we encountered the Apennines. The fatigue of this day's journey was compensated by the beauty and variety of the views among those mountains. On the face of one of the highest, I remarked a small hut, with a garden near it. I was told this was in-

habited by an old infirm Hermit. I could not understand how a person in that condition could scramble up and down such a mountain to procure for himself the necessaries of life. I was informed, he had not quitted his hermitage for several years, the neighbouring peasants supplying him plentifully with all he requires. This man's reputation for sanctity is very great, and those who take the trouble of carrying him provisions, think themselves well repaid by his prayers.

I imagine I am acquainted with a country where provisions are in greater plenty than in the Apennines ; and yet the greatest saint in the nation, who should take up his residence on one of its mountains, would be in great danger of starving, if he depended for his sustenance upon the provisions that should be carried up to him in exchange for his prayers.

There are mountains and precipices among the Apennines, which do not appear contemptible in the eyes even of those who have travelled among the Alps ; while on the other hand, those delightful plains, contained within the bosom of the former, are infinitely superior, in beauty and fertility, to the vallies among the latter. We now entered the rich province of Umbria, and soon after arrived at Foligno, a thriving town, in which there is more appearance of industry than in any of the towns

we have seen, since we left Ancona; there are considerable manufactures of paper, cloth, and silk. In a convent of Nuns, is a famous picture by Raphael, generally visited by travellers, and much admired by connoisseurs.

The situation of this town is peculiarly happy. It stands in a charming valley, laid out in corn-fields and vineyards, intersected by mulberry and almond trees, and watered by the river Clitumnus; the view terminating on one side by hills crowned with cities, and on the other by the loftiest mountains of the Apennines. I never experienced such a sudden and agreeable change of climate, as on descending from those mountains, in many places, at present, covered with snow, to this pleasant valley of Umbria,

Where western gales eternally reside,
And all the seasons lavish all their pride.

From Foligno to Vene, the road lies through this fine plain. A little before you come to the post-house at Vene, on the right hand, there is a little building; the front which looks to the valley, is adorned with six Corinthian pillars; the two in the middle enriched by a laurel foliage: on one side, is a crucifix in basso relievo, with vine branches curling around it. On this building, there are some inscriptions which mention the *resurrection*. Some,

who think the architecture too fine for the first ages of Christianity, and the Temple too old to have been built since the revival of that art, have conjectured, that this little edifice is antique, and originally erected by the ancient inhabitants of Umbria, as a temple, in honour of the river God Clitumnus; but, at some subsequent period, converted into a Christian chapel, and the crucifix and inscriptions added after its consecration. Other very respectable judges think, the style of architecture is by no means pure, but adulterated by meretricious ornament, and worthy enough of the first ages of Christianity.

Mr. Addison has given many quotations from the Latin poets, in honour of this river, all of which countenance the popular opinion with regard to the quality of the water. The breed of white cattle, which gave such a reputation to the river, still remains in this country. We saw many of them as we passed, some milk white, but the greatest numbers of a whitish grey. The common people still retain the ancient opinion, with respect to the effect of the water. Spoleto, the capital of Umbria, is situated on a high rock, the ascent to which is very steep on all sides. This town retains little appearance of its ancient importance. Keyser says, that, like other paltry towns in Italy, it exhibits bombastic inscriptions concerning its antiquity, and many trivial occur-

rences which have happened there ; the only inscription, however, which he quotes, and the only one which I saw, is that over the Porta di Fuga, from which the Carthaginian army is supposed to have been repulsed.

ANNIBAL

CÆSIS AD THRASYMENUM ROMANIS
URBEM ROMAM INFENSO AGMINE PETENS,
SPOLETO MAGNASUORUM CLADERE PULSUS,
INSIGNI FUGA PORTÆ NOMEN FECIT.

Hannibal, having defeated the Romans at Thrasymene, and marching his army to Rome, was repulsed from Spoleto with great slaughter. The memorable flight of the Carthaginians gave name to this gate.

I cannot perceive any thing bombastic in this ; Livy mentions the fact in his twenty-second book, in the following terms :

Annibal recto itinere per Umbriam usque ad Spoletum venit, inde quum perpopulato agro urbem oppugnare adortus esset, cum magna cæde suorum repulsus, conjectans ex unius coloniæ haud nimis profpere tentatæ viribus quanta moles Romanæ urbis esset.

Hannibal marched straight through Umbria to Spoleto, and after having laid the country waste, when he began to attack the town, he was beat off, with great slaughter of his soldiers. Such a check

from an inconsiderable colony, would naturally lead him to reflect on the difficulties he must encounter in subduing the Roman republic.

If the inhabitants of the greatest capital in the world had equal authority for their ancestors having repulsed such a general as Hannibal, would they not be inclined to receive it as truth, and to transmit it to the latest posterity?

This town is still supplied with water, by means of an antique aqueduct, one of the most entire, and the highest in Europe. In the centre, where the height is greatest, there is a double arcade; the other arches diminish in height, as they recede from it, towards the sloping sides of the two mountains which this magnificent work unites.

In the cathedral, there is a picture of the Virgin by St. Luke; but we had already seen sufficient specimens of this saint's abilities, as a sculptor and a painter, and we had not the least curiosity to see any more.

LETTER XXXV.

Rome.

LEAVING Spoleto, we passed over the highest of the Apennines, and then descended through a forest of olive trees, to the fruitful valley in which Terni is situated, on the river Nera. It was formerly called Interamna, on account of its standing between two branches of that river. The valley which stretches from this town to Terni, is exuberantly fertile, being finely exposed to the south sun, and watered by the Nera, which, by its beautiful windings, divides the plain into peninsulas of various shapes. The Emperor Tacitus, and his brother Florianus, were natives of Terni; but the greatest pride of that city is, its having given birth to Tacitus the Historian.

I am almost ashamed to tell you, that we did not go to see the famous cataract, near this town, which is usually visited by travellers, and which, by all accounts, is so worthy of their curiosity. Innumerable streams from the highest Apennines, meeting in one channel, form the river Velino, which flows pla-

cidly, for some time, through a plain almost horizontal, and afterwards, when the river becomes more rapid by the contracting and sloping of the channel, the plain terminates of a sudden in a precipice three hundred feet high, over which, the river rushing, dashes with such violence against the rocky bottom, that a vast cloud of watery smoke is raised all around. The river Velino does not long survive the fall, but broken, groaning, and foaming, soon finishes his course in the Nera. Mr. Addison is of opinion, that Virgil had this gulph in his eye when he described the place in the middle of Italy, through which the Fury Alecto descended into Tartarus.

A very heavy rain which fell while we were at Terni, the fatigue and difficulty of climbing up the Monte di Marmore, from whence this fall appears to the greatest advantage, and our impatience to be at Rome, prevented us from seeing that celebrated cataraet, which we regretted the less, as we had frequently seen one of the same kind in Scotland, about twelve miles above Hamilton, at a place called Corace, where the river Clyde, falling perpendicular from a vast height, produces the same effects, in every respect, unless, that he outlives the accident, and continues his course for near fifty miles before he joins the Atlantic ocean.

The distance from Terni to Narni is about seven miles ; the road is uncommonly good, and the country on each side delightful. When we came near Narni, while the chaises proceeded to the town, I walked to take a view of the bridge of Augustus. This stately fabric is wholly of marble, and without cement, as many other antique buildings are. Only one of the arches remains intire, which is the first on the side of the river where I was ; under it there was no water ; it is one hundred and fifty feet wide. The next arch, below which the river flows, is twenty feet wider, and has a considerable slope, being higher on the side next the first arch, than on that next the third. The remaining two arches are, in every respect, smaller than the two first. What could be the reason of such ungraceful irregularity in a work, in other respects so magnificent, and upon which so much labour and expence must have been bestowed, I cannot imagine. It is doubtful, whether there were originally four arches, or only three ; for that which is supposed by some to be the basis from which the two lesser arches sprung, is thought by others, to be the remains of a square pillar, raised some time after the bridge was built, to support the middle of the third arch ; which, on the supposition that there were but three, must have been of a very extraordinary width.

This fabric is usually called Augustus's Bridge, and Mr. Addison thinks that without doubt Martial alludes to it, in the ninety-second Epigram of the seventh book; but some other very judicious travellers imagine, it is the remains of an aqueduct, because those arches joined two mountains, and are infinitely higher than was necessary for a bridge over the little river which flows under them. It has also been supposed, not without great appearance of probability, that this fabric was originally intended to serve the purposes of both.

As the rain still continued, my curiosity to see this fine ruin procured me a severe drenching: this I received with due resignation, as a punishment for having been intimidated by rain, from visiting the fine cascade at Terni. It was with great difficulty I got up the hill, by a path which I thought was shorter and easier than the high road; this unfortunately led to no gate. At last, however, I observed a broken part of the wall, over which I immediately clambered into the town. Martial takes notice of the difficulty of access to this town.

Narnia, sulphureo quam gurgite candidus amnis
Circuit, ancipiti vix adeunda Jugo.

Narnia, surrounded by a sulphureous stream and dangerous cliffs, which render it almost inaccessible.

The town itself is very poor, and thinly inhabited. It boasts, however, of being the native city of the Emperor Nerva, and some other celebrated men.

The road from Narni to the post-house at Otricoli, is exceeding rough and mountainous. This is a very poor village, but advantageously situated on a rising ground. Between this and the Tiber, at some little distance from the road, there is a considerable tract of ground, covered with many loose antique fragments and vaults: these are generally considered as the ruins of the ancient Otriculum. We passed along this road early in the morning, and were entertained, great part of the way, with vocal music from the pilgrims, several hordes of whom we met near this place, on their return from Rome, where they had been on account of the jubilee.

The only place of note between Otricoli and Rome, is Civita Castellana. Terni is the last town of the province of Umbria, and Castellana the first of ancient Latium, coming to Rome by the Flaminian way. Castellana is considered, by many antiquarians, as the Fescennium of the ancients; a schoolmaster of which, as we are informed by Livy, by an unexampled instance of wickedness, betrayed a number of the sons of the principal citizens into the power of the Dictator Camillus, at

that time besieging the place. The generous Roman, equally abhorring the treachery and the traitor, ordered this base man to be stripped, to have his hands tied behind, and to be delivered over to the boys, who, armed with rods, beat him back to Fescennium, and delivered him up to their parents, to be used as they should think he deserved.

Civita Castellana stands upon a high rock, and must formerly have been a place of great strength, but is now in no very flourishing condition. Many of the towns I have mentioned, lying on the road to Rome, by the Flaminian way, have suffered, at different periods, more than those of any other part of Italy; by the inroads of Visigoths and Huns, as well as by some incursions of a later date.

This, I am convinced, is the only country in the world, where the fields become more desolate as you approach the capital. After having traversed the cultivated and fertile vallies of Umbria, one is affected with double emotion at beholding the deplorable state of poor neglected Latium. For several posts before you arrive at Rome, few villages, little cultivation, and scarcely any inhabitants, are to be seen. In the Campania of Rome, formerly the best cultivated and best peopled spot in the world, no houses, no trees, no inclosures; nothing but the scattered ruins of

temples and tombs, presenting the idea of a country depopulated by a pestilence. All is motionless, silent, and forlorn.

In the midst of these deserted fields the ancient Mistress of the World rears her head, in melancholy majesty.

LETTER XXXVI.

Rome.

YOU will not be surpris'd at my silence for some weeks past. On arriving at a place where there are so many interesting objects as at Rome, we are generally selfish enough to indulge our own curiosity very amply, before we gratify that of our friends in any degree. My first care was to wait on the Prince Guistiniani, for whom we had letters from Count Mahoni, the Spanish ambassador at Vienna, to whose niece that Prince is married. Nothing can exceed the politeness and attention the Prince and Princess have shewn. He waited immediately on the D— of H—, and insisted on taking us, in his own carriage, to every house of distinction. Two or three hours a day were spent in this ceremony. After being once presented, no farther introduction or invitation is necessary.

Our mornings are generally spent in visiting the antiquities, and the paintings in the palaces. On those occasions we are accompanied by Mr. Byres, a gentleman of probity,

knowledge, and real taste. We generally pass two or three hours every evening at the *conversazione*; I speak in the plural number, for we are sometimes at several in the same evening. It frequently happens, that three or four, or more, of the nobility, have these assemblies at the same time; and almost all the company of a certain rank in Rome make it a point, if they go to any, to go to all; so that, although there is a great deal of bustle, and a continual change of place, there is scarcely any change of company, or any variation in the amusement, except what the change of place occasions: but this circumstance alone is often found an useful accomplice in the murder of a tedious evening; for when the company find no great amusement in one place, they fly to another, in hopes they may be better entertained. These hopes are generally disappointed; but that does not prevent them from trying a third, and a fourth; and although to whatever length the experiment is pushed, it always terminates in new disappointments, yet, at last, the evening is dispatched; and, without this locomotive resource, I have seen people in danger of dispatching themselves. This bustle, and running about after objects which give no permanent satisfaction, and without fully knowing whence we came, or whither we are going, you'll say, is a mighty silly business. It is so;—and, after all the swelling import-

ance that some people assume, Pray what is human life?

Having told you what five or six conversazioni are, I shall endeavour to give you some idea of what *one* is. These assemblies are always in the principal apartment of the palace, which is generally on the second, but sometimes on the third floor. It is not always perfectly easy to find this apartment, because it sometimes happens that the staircase is very ill lighted. On entering the hall, where the footmen of the company are assembled, your name is pronounced aloud, by some servants of the family, and repeated by others, as you walk through several rooms. Those whose names are not known, are announced by the general denomination of *i Cavalieri Forestieri*, or *Ingleſi*, as you paſs through the different rooms, till you come to that in which the company are assembled, where you are received by the maſter or miſtreſs of the houſe, who ſits exactly within the door for that purpoſe. Having made a ſhort compliment there, you mix with the company, which is ſometimes ſo large, that none but the ladies can have the convenience of ſitting. Notwithſtanding the great ſize and number of the rooms in the Italian palaces, it frequently happens that the company are ſo preſſed together, that you can with difficulty move from one room to another. There always is a greater number of men than

women; no lady comes without a gentleman to hand her. This gentleman, who acts the part of Cavaliero Servente, may be her relation in any degree, or her lover, or both. It is allowed him to be connected with her in any way but one—he must not be her husband. Familiarities between man and wife are still connived at in this country however, provided they are carried on in private; but for a man to be seen hand in hand with his wife, in public, would not be tolerated.

At Cardinal Berni's assembly, which is usually more crowded than any in Rome, the company are served with coffee, lemonade, and iced confections of various kinds; but this custom is not universal. In short, at a *conversazione*, you have an opportunity of seeing a number of well-dressed people, you speak a few words to those you are acquainted with, you bow to the rest, and enjoy the happiness of being squeezed and pressed among the best company in Rome. I do not know what more can be said of these assemblies; only it may be necessary to prevent mistakes, to add, that a *conversazione* is a place where there is no conversation. They break up about nine o'clock, all but a small select company, who are invited to supper. But the present race of Romans are by no means so fond of convivial entertainments, as their predecessors. The magnificence of the Roman nobility displays itself

now in other articles than the luxuries of the table: they generally dine at home, in a very private manner. Strangers are seldom invited to dinner, except by the foreign ambassadors. The hospitality of Cardinal Berni alone makes up for every deficiency of that nature. There is no ambassador from the Court of Great Britain at Rome, but the English feel no want of one. If the French Cardinal had been instructed by his court to be peculiarly attentive to them, he could not be more so than he is. Nothing can exceed the elegant magnificence of his table, nor the splendid hospitality in which he lives. Years have not impaired the wit and vivacity for which he was distinguished in his youth; and no man could support the pretensions of the French nation to superior politeness, better than their ambassador at Rome.

There are no lamps lighted in the streets at night; and all Rome would be in utter darkness, were it not for the candles, which the devotion of individuals sometimes places before certain statues of the Virgin. Those appear faintly glimmering at vast intervals, like stars in a cloudy night. The lackeys carry dark lanthorns behind the carriages of people of the first distinction. The Cardinals, and other Ecclesiastics, do not choose to have their coaches seen before the door of every house they visit. In the midst of this darkness, you will natu-

rally conclude, that amorous assignations in the streets are not unfrequent among the inferior people. When a carriage, with a lantern behind it, accidentally comes near a couple who do not wish to be known, one of them calls out, "*Volti la lanterna,*" and is obeyed; the carriage passing without farther notice being taken. Venus, as you know, has always been particularly respected at Rome, on account of her amour with Anchises.

————— *Genus unde Latinum*

Albanique patres, atque alta mœnia Romæ.

Hence the fam'd Latium line, and senates come,
And the proud triumphs, and the tow'rs of Rome.

PITT.

The Italians, in general, have a remarkable air of gravity, which they preserve even when the subject of their conversation is gay. I observed something of this at Venice, but I think it is much stronger at Rome. The Roman ladies have a languor in their countenances, which promises as much sensibility as the brisk look of the French; and, without the volubility of the latter, or the frankness of the Venetian women, they seem no way averse to form connections with strangers. The D— of H— was presented to a beautiful young Lady at one of the assemblies. In the course of conversation he happened to say, That he had heard

she had been married very lately. She answered, with precipitation, "Signor sì—ma mio "marito è uno Vecchio." Yes, my Lord, but my husband is an old man. She then added, shaking her head, and in a most affecting tone of voice, "O santissima Virgine, quanto è Vecchio!" O holy Virgin, how exceeding old he is!

L E T T E R XXXVII.

Rome.

AUTHORS differ very much in opinion with respect to the number of inhabitants which Rome contained at the period when it was most populous. Some accounts make them seven millions, and others a still greater number. These seem all to be incredible exaggerations. It is not probable, that what is properly called the city of Rome, ever extended beyond the wall built by Belisarius, after he had defeated the Goths. This wall has been frequently repaired since, and is still standing; it is about thirteen or fourteen miles in circuit, which is nearly the size that Rome was of, according to Pliny, in the days of Vespasian. Those who assert, that the number of inhabitants in ancient Rome, when it was most populous, could not exceed a million, exclusive of slaves, are thought moderate in their calculation; but when we consider that the circumference of thirteen or fourteen miles is not equal to that of either Paris or London; that the Campus Martius, which is the best built part of modern Rome, was a field, without a house upon it, anciently; and that

the rising ground, where St. Peter's church and the Vatican stand, was no part of old Rome; it will be difficult to conceive that ever Rome could boast a million of inhabitants. For my own part, if the wall of Belisarius is admitted as the boundary of the ancient city, I cannot imagine it to have, at any time, contained above five or six hundred thousand, without supposing the masters of the world to have been the worst lodged people in it.

But if, in the computations above mentioned, the suburbs are included; if those who lived without the walls are considered as inhabitants; in that case there will be room enough for any number, the limits of the suburbs not being ascertained.

The buildings immediately without the walls of Rome, which were connectedly continued so as to merit the name of suburbs, were certainly of vast extent; and with those of the town itself, must have contained a prodigious number of people. By a calculation made by Mr. Byres, the Circus Maximus was of sufficient size to accommodate three hundred and eighty thousand spectators; and we are told by the Latin poets, that it was usually full. Now if allowance is made for the superannuated, the sick, and infirm; also for children, and those employed in their private business, and for slaves, who were not permitted

to remain in the Circus during the games; Mr. Byres imagines that such a number as three hundred and eighty thousand spectators could not be supplied by a city and suburbs the number of whose inhabitants were much under three millions.

Whatever may have been the extent of the suburbs of Rome, it is probable they were only formed of ordinary houses, and inhabited by people of inferior rank. There are no remains of palaces, or magnificent buildings of any kind, to be now seen near the walls, or indeed over the whole Campania; yet it is asserted by some authors, that this wide surface was peopled, at one period, like a continued village; and we are told of strangers, who, viewing this immense plain covered with houses, imagined they had already entered Rome, when they were thirty miles from the walls of that city.

Some of the seven hills on which Rome was built, appear now but gentle swellings, owing to the intervals between them being greatly raised by the rubbish of ruined houses. Some have hardly houses of any kind upon them, being entirely laid out in gardens and vineyards. It is generally thought, that two-thirds of the surface within the walls are in this situation, or covered with ruins; and, by the information I have the greatest reliance on, the number of the inhabitants at present is

about one hundred and seventy thousand, which, though greatly inferior to what Rome contained in the days of its ancient power, is more than it has been, for the most part, able to boast since the fall of the Empire. There is good authority for believing that this city, at particular periods since that time, some of them not very remote, has been reduced between thirty and forty thousand inhabitants. The numbers have gradually increased during the whole of this century. As it was much less expensive to purchase new ground for building upon, than to clear any ruins which, by time, had acquired the consistence of rock, great part of the modern city is built on what was the ancient Campus Martius.

Some of the principal streets are of considerable length, and perfectly straight. That called the Corso, is the most frequented. It runs from the Porto del Popolo, along the side of the Campus Martius, next to the ancient city. Here the nobility display their equipages during the carnival, and take the air in the evenings in fine weather. It is indeed the great scene of Roman magnificence and amusement.

The shops on each side, are three or four feet higher than the street; and there is a path for the convenience of foot passengers, on a level with the shops. The palaces, of which there are several in this street, range in a line

with the houses, having no court before them, as the hotels in Paris have ; and not being shut up from the sight of the citizens by high gloomy walls, as Devonshire and Burlington houses in London are. Such dismal barricades are more suitable to the unsocial character of a proud Baron, in the days of aristocratic tyranny, than to the hospitable benevolent disposition of their present proprietor.

The Corso, I have said, commences at the fine area immediately within the Porto del Popolo. This is the gate by which we entered Rome ; it is built in a noble style of elegant simplicity, from the design of Michael Angelo, executed by Bernini.

The Strada Felice, in the higher part of the city, is about a mile and a half in length from the Trinità del Monte, to the church of St. John Lateran, on the Pincian hill. This street runs in a straight line, but the view is interrupted by a fine church called St. Maria Maggiore. The Strada Felice is crossed by another straight street, called the Strada di Porta Pia, terminated at one end by that gate ; and at the other by four colossal statues in white marble, of two horses led by two men supposed by some, to be representations of Alexander taming Bucephalus ; and according to others, of Castor and Pollux. They are placed before

the Pope's palace, on the Quirinal Hill, and have a noble effect.

It would be more difficult to convey an idea of the smaller and less regular streets. I shall therefore only observe, in general, that Rome at present exhibits a strange mixture of magnificent and interesting, common and beggarly objects; the former consists of palaces, churches, fountains, and above all, the remains of antiquity. The latter comprehends all the rest of the city. The church of St. Peter's, in the opinion of many, surpasses, in size and magnificence, the finest monuments of ancient architecture. The Grecian and Roman temples were more distinguished for the elegance of their form, than their magnitude. The Pantheon, which was erected to all the Gods, is the most entire antique temple in Rome. It is said, that Michael Angelo, to confirm the triumph of modern over ancient architecture, made the dome of St. Peter's of the same diameter with the Pantheon; raising the immense fabric upon four pilasters; whereas the whole circle of the rotunda rests upon the ground. This great artist, perhaps, was delighted with the idea of being thought as superior to the ancient architects, as he was conscious of being inferior to some of the sculptors of antiquity.

All who have seen St. Paul's in London may, by an enlargement of its dimensions, form some idea of the external appearance of St. Peter's. But the resemblance fails entirely on comparing them within ; St. Peter's being lined, in many parts, with the most precious and beautiful marble, adorned with valuable pictures, and all the powers of sculpture.

The approach to St. Peter's church excels that to St. Paul's in a still greater proportion, than the former surpasses the latter either in size, or in the richness and beauty of the internal ornaments. A magnificent portico advances on each side from the front, by which means a square court is formed immediately before the steps which lead into the church. The two porticoes form two sides of the square, the third is closed by the front of the church, and the fourth is open. A colonnade, four columns deep, commences at the extremities of the porticoes ; and embracing, in an oval direction, a space far wider than the square, forms the most magnificent area that perhaps ever was seen before any building. This oval colonnade is crowned with a balustrade, ornamented by a great number of statues ; and consists of above three hundred large pillars, forming three separate walks, which lead to the advanced portico, and from that into the church. In the middle of the immense area, stands an Egyptian obelisk of

granite; and to the right and left of this, two very beautiful fountains refresh the atmosphere with streams of clear water. The delighted eye glancing over these splendid objects, would rest with complete satisfaction on the stupendous fabric to which they serve as embellishments, if the façade of this celebrated church had been equal in beauty and elegance to the rest of the building. But this is by no means the case, and every impartial judge must acknowledge, that the front of St. Peter's is, in those particulars, inferior to that of our St. Paul's.

The length of St. Peter's, taken on the outside, is exactly seven hundred and thirty feet; the breadth five hundred and twenty; and the height, from the pavement to the top of the cross, which crowns the cupola, four hundred and fifty. The grand portico before the entrance, is two hundred and sixteen feet in length, and forty in breadth.

It is usual to desire strangers, on their first entering this church, to guess at the size of the objects, which, on account of the distance, always seem less than they are in reality. The statues of the Angels, in particular, which support the founts of holy water, when viewed from the door, seem no bigger than children; but when you approach nearer, you perceive they are six feet high. We make no such mis-

take on seeing a living man at the same, or a greater distance; because the knowledge we have of a man's real size precludes the possibility of our being mistaken, and we make allowance for the diminution which distance occasions; but Angels, and other figures in sculpture, having no determined standard, but being under the arbitrary will of the statuary, who gives them the bulk of giants or dwarfs as best suits his purpose, we do not know what allowance to make; and the eye, unused to such large masses, is confounded, and incapacitated from forming a right judgment of an object six feet high, or of any other dimensions, which it was not previously acquainted with.

It is not my design to attempt a description of the statues, basso relievos, columns, pictures, and various ornaments of this church; such an account, faithfully executed, would fill volumes. The finest of all the ornaments have a probability of being longer preserved than would once have been imagined, by the astonishing improvements which have of late been made in the art of copying pictures in Mosaic. Some of the artists here, have already made copies with a degree of accuracy, which nobody could believe who had not seen the performances. By this means, the works of Raphael, and other great painters, will be transmitted to a later posterity than they themselves

expected; and although all the beauty of the originals cannot be retained in the copy, it would be gross affectation to deny that a great part of it is. How happy would it make the real lovers of the art in this age, to have such specimens of the genius of Zeuxis, Apelles, and other ancient painters!

It has been frequently remarked, that the proportions of this church are so fine, and the symmetry of its different parts so exquisite, that the whole seems considerably smaller than it really is. It was, however, certainly intended to appear a great and sublime object, and to produce admiration by the vastness of its dimensions. I cannot, therefore, be of opinion, that any thing which has a tendency to defeat this effect, can with propriety be called an excellence. I should on the contrary imagine, that if the architect could have made the church appear larger than it is in reality, this would have been a more desirable effect; provided it could have been produced without diminishing our admiration in some more material point. If this could not be accomplished; if it is absolutely certain, that those proportions in architecture, which produce the most beautiful effect on the whole, always make a building seem smaller than it is; this ought rather to be mentioned as an unfortunate than as a fortunate circumstance. The more I reflect on this, it appears to me the more certain,

that no system of proportions, which has the effect of making a large building appear small, is *therefore* excellent. If the property of reducing great things to little ones is inherent in all harmonious proportions; it is, in my opinion, an imperfection, and much to be lamented. In small buildings, where we expect to derive our pleasure from grace and elegance, the evil may be borne; but in edifices of vast dimensions, capable of sublimity from their bulk, the vice of diminishing is not to be compensated by harmony. The sublime has no equivalent.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Rome.

THE grand procession of the Possesso took place a few days ago. This is a ceremony performed by every Pope, as soon as conveniency will permit, after the Conclave has declared in his favour. It is equivalent to the coronation in England, or the consecration at Rheims. On this occasion, the Pope goes to the Basilica of St. John Lateran, and, as the phrase is, takes possession of it. This church, they tell you, is the most ancient of all the churches in Rome, and the mother of all the churches in christendom. When he has got possession of this, therefore, he *must* be the real head of the Christian church, and Christ's vicegerent upon earth. From St. John Lateran's he proceeds to the Capitol, and receives the keys of that fortress; after which, it is equally clear, that as an earthly prince, he ought, like the ancient possessors of the Capitol, to have a supremacy over all kings.

The prince Guistiniani procured a place for us, at the Senator's house in the Capitol, from

whence we might see the procession to the greatest advantage. On arriving, we were surprised to find the main body of the Palace, as well as the Palazzo dé Conservatori, and the Museum, which form the two wings, all hung with crimson silk, laced with gold. The bases and capitals of the pillars and pilasters, where the silk could not be accurately applied, were gilt. Only imagine, what a figure the Farnesian Hercules would make, dressed in a silk suit, like a French petit-maitre. To cover the noble simplicity of Michael Angelo's architecture with such frippery by way of ornament, is, in my mind, a piece of refinement equally laudable.

Throwing an eye on the Pantheon, and comparing it with the Campidoglio in its present dress, the beauty and justness of the following lines seemed more striking than ever.

Mark, how the dread Pantheon stands,
Amid the domes of modern hands,
Amid the toys of idle state,
How simply, how severely great!

We were led to a balcony, where a number of ladies of the first distinction in Rome were assembled. There were no men excepting a very few strangers; most part of the Roman noblemen having some function in the procession. The instant of his Holiness's departure

from the Vatican, was announced by a discharge of cannon from the castle of St. Angelo; on the top of which, the standard of the church had been flying ever since morning. We had a full view of the cavalcade, on its return from the church, as it ascended to the Capitol. The officers of the Pope's horse guards were dressed in a style equally rich and becoming. It was something between the Hungarian and Spanish dress. I do not know whether the King of Prussia would approve of the great profusion of plumage they wore in their hats; but it is picturesque, and showy qualities are the most essential to the guards of his Holiness. The Swiss guards were, on this occasion, dressed with less propriety; their uniforms were real coats of mail, with iron helmets on their heads, as if they had been to take the Capitol by storm, and expected a vigorous resistance. Their appearance was strongly contrasted with that of the Roman Barons, who were on horseback, without boots, and in full dress; each of them was preceded by four pages, their hair hanging in regular ringlets to the middle of their backs: they were followed by a number of servants in rich liveries. Bishops and other ecclesiastics succeeded the Barons; and then came the Cardinals on horseback, in their purple robes, which covered every part of the horses, except the head. You may be sure that the horses employed at such ceremonies are the gentlest

that can be found; for if they were at all unruly, they might not only injure the surrounding crowd, but throw their Eminencies, who are not celebrated for their skill in horsemanship. Last of all comes the Pope himself, mounted on a milk white mule, distributing blessings with an unsparing hand among the multitude, who follow him with acclamations of Viva il Santo Padre, Long live the holy Father! and, prostrating themselves on the ground before his mule, Benedizione Santo Padre, Your blessing, Holy Father. The Holy Father took particular care to wave his hand in the form of the cross, that the blessings he pronounced at the same instant might have the greater efficacy. As his Holiness is employed in this manner during the whole procession, he cannot be supposed to give the least attention to his mule, the bridle of which is held by two persons who walk by his side, with some others, to catch the *infallible* Father of the Church, and prevent his being thrown to the ground, in case the mule should stumble.

At the entrance of the Capitol he was met by the Senator of Rome, who, falling on his knees, delivered the keys into the hands of his Holiness, who pronounced a blessing over him, and restored him the keys. Proceeding from the Capitol, the Pope was met by a deputation of Jews, soon after he had passed through the

Arch of Titus. They were headed by the chief Rabbi, who presented him with a long scroll of parchment, on which is written the whole law of Moses in Hebrew. His Holiness received the parchment in a very gracious manner, telling the Rabbi at the same time, that he accepted his present out of respect to the law itself, but entirely rejected his interpretation; for the ancient law, having been fulfilled by the coming of the Messiah, was no longer in force. As this was not a convenient time or place for the Rabbi to enter into a controversy upon the subject, he bowed his head in silence, and retired with his countrymen, in the full conviction, that the falsehood of the Pope's assertion would be made manifest to the whole universe in due time. His Holiness, mean while, proceeded in triumph, through the principal streets, to the Vatican.

This procession, I am told, is one of the most showy and magnificent which takes place, on any occasion, in this city; where there are certainly more solemn exhibitions of the same kind than in any other country; yet, on the whole, I own it did not afford me much satisfaction; nor could all their pomp and finery prevent an uneasy recollection, not unmixed with sentiments of indignation, from obtruding on my mind. To feel unmixed admiration in beholding the Pope and his Cardinals

marching in triumph to the Capitol, one must forget those who walked in triumph formerly to the same place; forget entirely that such men as Camillus, Scipio, Paulus Æmilius, and Pompey, ever existed; they must forget Cato, whose campaign in Africa was so much admired by Lucan, that he declares, he would rather have had the glory of that single campaign than Pompey's three triumphs, and all the honour he obtained by finishing the Jugurthan war.

Hunc ego per Syrtes, Libyæque extrema triumphum
Ducere maluerim, quam ter Capitolia curru
Scandere Pompeii, quam frangere colla Jugurthæ.

This triumph, this, on Lybia's utmost bound,
With death and desolation compassed round,
To all thy glories, Pompey, I prefer,
Thy trophies, and thy third triumphal car;
To Marius' mighty name, and great Jugurthine war.

Rowe.

We must forget Caius Cassius, Marcus Brutus, and all the great and virtuous men of ancient Rome, whom we have admired from our childhood, and of whose great qualities our admiration increases with our experience and knowledge of the present race of mankind. To be in the Capitol, and not think and speak of the worthies of the ancient Republic, is almost impossible.

**Quis te, magne Cato, tacitum ; aut te Cossæ relinquat ?
 Quis Gracchi genus ? aut geminos, duo fulmina belli,
 Scipiadas, &c. &c.**

**What tongue, just Cato, can thy praise forbear !
 Or each brave Scipio's noble deeds declare ?
 Afric's dread foes ; two thunderbolts of war !**

PITT.

LETTER XXXIX.

Rome.

HAVING said so much of St. Peter's, unquestionably the finest piece of modern architecture in Rome, allow me to mention some of the best specimens of the ancient. I shall begin with the Pantheon, which, though not the largest of the Roman temples, is the most perfect which now remains. The Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, and the Temple of Peace, if we may trust to the accounts we have of the first, and to the ruins of the second, in the Campo Vaccino, were both much larger than the Pantheon. In spite of the depredations which this last has sustained from Goths, Vandals, and Popes, it still remains a beauteous monument of Roman taste. The pavilion of the great altar, which stands under the cupola in St. Peter's, and the four wreathed pillars of Corinthian brass which support it, were formed out of the spoils of the Pantheon, which, after all, and with the weight of eighteen hundred years upon its head, has still a probability of outliving its proud rapacious rival. From the round form of this temple, it

has obtained the name of Rotunda. Its height is a hundred and fifty feet, and its diameter nearly the same. Within it is divided into eight parts; the gate at which you enter forming one: the other seven compartments, if they may be so called, are each of them distinguished by two fluted Corinthian pillars, and as many pilasters of Giallo Antico. The capitals and bases are of white marble; these support a circular entablature. The wall is perpendicular for half the height of the temple; it then slopes forward as it ascends, the circumference gradually diminishing, till it terminates in an opening of about twenty-five feet diameter. There are no windows; the central opening in the vault admitting a sufficiency of light, has a much finer effect than windows could have had. No great inconvenience can happen from this opening. The conical form of the temple prevents the rain from falling near the walls where the altars now are, and where the statues of the Gods were formerly placed. The rain which falls in the middle immediately drills through holes which perforate a large piece of porphyry that forms the centre of the pavement, the whole of which consists of various pieces of marble, agate, and other materials, which have been picked up from the ruins, and now compose a singular kind of Mosaic work.

The portico was added by Marcus Agrippa, the son-in-law of Augustus. It is supported by sixteen pillars of granite, five feet in diameter, and of a single piece each. Upon the frieze, in the front, is the following inscription in large capitals :

M. AGRIPPA L. F. CONSUL TERTIUM FECIT.

Founded by Marcus Agrippa, the son of Lucius, during his third consulship.

Some are of opinion, that the Pantheon is much more ancient than the Augustan age, and that the portico, which is the only part those antiquarians admit to be the work of Agrippa, though beautiful in itself, does not correspond with the simplicity of the temple.

As the Pantheon is the most entire, the Amphitheatre of Vespasian is the most stupendous, monument of antiquity in Rome. It was finished by his son Titus, and obtained the name of Colosseum, afterwards corrupted into Coliseum, from a colossal statue of Apollo which was placed before it. This vast structure was built of Tiburtine stone, which is remarkably durable. If the public buildings of the ancient Romans had met with no more inveterate enemy than Time, we might, at this day, contemplate the greater number in all their original perfection ; they were form-

ed for the admiration of much remoter ages than the present. This Amphitheatre in particular might have stood entire for two thousand years to come: For what are the slow corrosions of time, in comparison of the rapid destruction from the fury of Barbarians, the zeal of Bigots, and the avarice of Popes and Cardinals? The first depredation made on this stupendous building, was by the inhabitants of Rome themselves, at that time greater Goths than their conqueror. We are told, they applied to Theodoric, whose court was then at Ravenna, for liberty to take the stones of this Amphitheatre for some public work they were carrying on. The marble cornices, the friezes, and other ornaments of this building, have been carried away, at various times, to adorn palaces; and the stones have been taken to build churches, and sometimes to repair the walls of Rome, the most useless work of all. For of what importance are walls to a city, without a garrison, and whose most powerful artillery affects not the bodies, but only the minds, of men? About one-half of the external circuit still remains, from which, and the ruins of the other parts, a pretty exact idea may be formed of the original structure. By a computation made by Mr. Byres, it could contain eighty-five thousand spectators, making a convenient allowance for each. Fourteen chapels are now erected within side, representing the stages of our Saviour's passion.

This expedient of consecrating them into Christian chapels and churches, has saved some of the finest remains of Heathen magnificence from utter destruction.

Our admiration of the Romans is tempered with horror, when we reflect on the use formerly made of this immense building, and the dreadful scenes which were acted on the Arena; where not only criminals condemned to death, but also prisoners taken in war, were obliged to butcher each other, for the entertainment of an inhuman populace. The combats of Gladiators were at first used in Rome at funerals only, where prisoners were obliged to assume that profession, and fight before the tombs of deceased Generals or Magistrates, in imitation of the barbarous custom of the Greeks, of sacrificing captives at the tombs of their heroes.

This horrid piece of magnificence, which, at first, was exhibited only on the death of Consuls, and men of the highest distinction, came gradually to be claimed by every citizen who was sufficiently rich to defray the expence; and as the people's fondness for these combats increased every day, they were no longer confined to funeral solemnities, but became customary on days of public rejoicing, and were exhibited, at amazing expence, by some Generals after victories. In the pro-

gress of riches, luxury, and vice, it became a profession in Rome to deal in gladiators. Men called Lanistæ made it their business to purchase prisoners and slaves, to have them instructed in the use of the various weapons; and when any Roman chose to amuse the people with their favourite show, or to entertain a select company of his own friends upon any particular occasion, he applied to the Lanistæ; who, for a fixed price, furnished him with as many pairs of those unhappy combatants as he required. They had various names given to them, according to the different manner in which they were armed. Towards the end of the republic, some of the rich and powerful citizens had great numbers of gladiators of their own, who were daily exercised by the Lanistæ, and always kept ready for fighting when ordered by their proprietors. Those who were often victorious, or had the good fortune to please their masters, had their liberty granted them, on which they generally quit-
ted their profession; though it sometimes happened, that those who were remarkably skilful, continued it, either from vanity or poverty, even after they had obtained their freedom; and the applause bestowed on those gladiators, had the effect of inducing men born free, to choose this for a profession, which they exercised for money, till age impaired their strength and address. They then hung up their arms

in the temple of Hercules, and appeared no more on the Arena.

————— Veianius armis
Herculis ad postem fixis latet abditus agro,
Ne populum extrema toties exoret Arena.

Secure in his retreat Vejanus lies ;
Hangs up his arms, nor courts the doubtful prize ;
Wisely resolved to tempt his fate no more,
Or the light crowd for his discharge implore.

FRANCIS.

There were many Amphitheatres at Rome, in other towns of Italy, and in many provinces of the empire ; but this of Vespasian was the largest that ever was built. That at Verona is the next in size in Italy, and the remains of the Amphitheatre at Nimes, in the south of France, prove, that it was the most magnificent structure of this kind in any of the Roman provinces. The Romans were so excessively fond of these exhibitions, that wherever colonies were established, it was found requisite to give public shews of this kind, to induce the emigrants to remain in their new country : and in the provinces where it was thought necessary that a considerable body of troops should remain constantly, structures of this kind were erected, at vast labour and expence, and were found the best means of inducing the young officers to submit cheerfully to a long absence from the capital, and

of preventing the common soldiers from desertion. The profusion of human blood, which was shed in the Arena, by the cruel prodigality of the Emperors, and the refinements which were invented to augment the barbarous pleasure of the spectators, are proofs of the dreadful degree of corruption and depravity to which human nature is capable of attaining, even among a learned and enlightened people, when unrestrained by the mild precepts of a benevolent religion. We are told, that the gladiators bred for the use of particular patricians, as well as those kept for hire by the Lanistæ, were, for some weeks before they appeared in the Arena, fed upon such succulent diet, as would soonest fill their veins, that they might bleed freely at every wound. They were instructed by the Lanistæ, not only in the art of fighting, but also in the most graceful manner of dying; and when those wretched men felt themselves mortally wounded, they assumed such attitudes as they knew pleased the beholders; and they seemed to receive pleasure themselves from the applause bestowed upon them in their last moments.

When a gladiator was thrown by his antagonist to the ground, and directly laid down his arms, it was a sign that he could resist no longer, and declared himself vanquished; but still his life depended on the spectators. If they were pleased with his performance, or,

in a merciful disposition, they held up their hands, with the thumb folded down, and the life of the man was spared; but if they were in the humour to see him die, they held up the hand clenched, with the thumb only erect. As soon as the prostrate victim beheld that fatal signal, he knew all hopes of life were vain, and immediately presented his breast to the sword of his adversary, who, whatever his own inclinations might be, was obliged to put him to death instantly.

As these combats formed the supreme pleasure of the inhabitants of Rome, the most cruel of their Emperors were sometimes the most popular; merely because they gratified the people, without restraint, in their favourite amusement. When Marcus Aurelius thought it necessary, for the public service, to recruit his army from the gladiators of Rome; it raised more discontent among the populace, than many of the wildest pranks of Caligula. In the times of some of the Emperors, the lower class of Roman citizens were certainly as worthless a set of men as ever existed; stained with all the vices which arise from idleness and dependence; living upon the largesses of the great; passing their whole time in the Circus and Amphitheatres, where every sentiment of humanity was annihilated within their breasts, and where the agonies and torments of their fellow-creatures were their chief pastime. That

no occasion might be lost of indulging this savage taste of the populace, criminals were condemned to fight with wild beasts in the Arena, or were exposed, unarmed, to be torn in pieces by them; at other times, they were blindfolded, and in that condition obliged to cut and slaughter each other. So that, instead of victims solemnly sacrificed to public justice, they seemed to be brought in as buffoons to raise the mirth of the spectators.

The practice of domestic slavery had also a great influence in rendering the Romans of a cruel and haughty character. Masters could punish their slaves in what manner, and to what degree, they thought proper. It was as late as the Emperor Adrian's time, before any law was made, ordaining that a master who should put his slave to death without sufficient cause, should be tried for his life. The usual porter at the gate of a great man's house in ancient Rome, was a chained slave. The noise of whips and lashes resounded from one house to another, at the time when it was customary for the masters of families to take an account of the conduct of their servants. This cruel disposition, as is the case wherever domestic slavery prevails, extended to the gentle sex, and hardened the mild tempers of the women. What a picture has Juvenal drawn of the toilet of a Roman lady!

Nam si constituit, solitoque decentius optat
Ornari——

Componit crinem laceratis ipsa capillis,
Nuda humeros Psecas infelix, nudisque mamillis.
Altior hic quare cincinnus? Taurea punit,
Continuo flexi crimen facinusque capilli.

But if she has made an assignation, and wishes to be dressed with more nicety than usual—Poor Psecas (her female slave), with her hair torn about her ears, and stripped to the waist, adjusts the lock of her mistress. *Why is this curl so high?* Presently the whip punishes the disorder of the least hair.

It was customary for avaricious masters to send their infirm and sick slaves, to an island in the Tiber, where there was a Temple of Æsculapius; if the God pleased to recover them, the master took them back to his family; if they died, no farther inquiry was made about them. The Emperor Claudius put a check to this piece of inhumanity, by ordaining, that every sick slave, thus abandoned by his master, should be declared free when he recovered his health.

From these observations, are we to infer, that the ancient Romans were *naturally* of a more cruel turn of mind, than the present inhabitants of Europe? Or is there not reason to believe that, in the same circumstances, modern nations would act in the same manner?

Do we not perceive, that the practice of domestic slavery has, at this day, a strong tendency to render men haughty, capricious, and cruel. Such, I am afraid, is the nature of man, that if he has power without controul, he will use it without justice; absolute power has a strong tendency to make good men bad, and never fails to make bad men worse.

It was an observation of the late Mareschal Saxe, that in all the contests between the army waggoners and their horses, the waggoners were in the wrong; which he imputed to their having absolute authority over the horses. In the qualities of the head and heart, and in most other respects, he thought the men and horses on an equality. Caprice is a vice of the temper, which increases faster than any other by indulgence; it often spoils the best qualities of the heart, and, in particular situations, degenerates into the most unsufferable tyranny. The first appearance of it in young minds ought to be opposed with firmness, and prevented from farther progress, otherwise our future attempts to arrest it may be fruitless; for

Mobilitate viget, viresque acquirit eundo.

———— every moment grows,
And gains new strength and vigour as it goes.

PITT.

The combats in the Amphitheatres were, as I have already said, introduced by degrees at Rome. The custom of making prisoners fight around the funeral piles of deceased heroes, was a refinement on a more barbarous practice; and the Romans, no doubt, valued themselves on their humanity, in not butchering their prisoners in cold blood, as was the custom in the earliest ages of Greece. The institution of obliging criminals to fight in the Arena, and thus giving them a chance for their lives, would also appear to them a very merciful improvement on the common manner of execution. The grossest sophistry will pass on men's understandings, when it is used in support of measures to which they are already inclined. And when we consider the eagerness with which the populace of every country behold the accidental combats, which occur in the streets, we need not be surprised to find, that when once the combats of gladiators were permitted among the Roman populace, on whatever pretext, the taste for them would daily increase, till it erased every idea of compunction from their breasts, and became their ruling passion. The Patricians, enriched by the pillage of kingdoms, and knowing that their power at Rome, and consequently all over the world, depended on the favour and suffrages of the people, naturally sought popularity by gratifying their favourite taste. Afterwards the Emperors might

imagine, that such shows would keep the citizens from reflecting on their lost liberties, or the enormities of the new form of government; and, exclusive of every political reason, many of them, from the barbarous disposition of their own minds, would take as much pleasure in the scenes acted on the Arena, as the most savage of the vulgar.

While we express horror and indignation at the fondness which the Romans displayed for the bloody combats of the Amphitheatre, let us reflect, whether this proceeded from any peculiar cruelty of disposition inherent in that people, or belongs to mankind in general; let us reflect, whether it is probable, that the people of any other nation would not be gradually led, by the same degrees, to an equal passion for such horrid entertainments. Let us consider, whether there is reason to suspect that those who arm cocks with steel, and take pleasure in beholding the spirited little animals cut one another to death, would not take the same, or superior delight, in obliging men to slaughter each other if they had the power.—And what restrains them? Is there no reason to believe, that the influence of a purer religion, and brighter example, than were known to the Heathen world, prevents mankind from those enormities *now*, which were permitted and countenanced formerly? As

soon as the benevolent precepts of Christianity were received by the Romans as the laws of the Deity, the prisoners and the slaves were treated with humanity, and the bloody exhibitions in the Amphitheatres were abolished.

LETTER XL.

Rome.

YOU are surpris'd that I have hitherto said nothing of the Capitol, and the Forum Romanum, which is by far the most interesting scene of antiquities in Rome. The objects worthy of attention are so numerous, and appear so confus'd, that it was a considerable time before I could form a tolerable distinct idea of their situation with respect to each other, though I have paid many more visits to this than any other spot since I have been in this city. Before we enter'd a church or palace, we ran thither with as much impatience as if the Capitol had been in danger of falling before our arrival. The approach to the modern Campidoglio is very noble, and worthy of the genius of Michael Angelo. The building itself is also the work of that great artist; it is rais'd on part of the ruins of the ancient Capitol, and fronts St. Peter's church, with its back to the Forum and old Rome. Ascending this celebrated hill, the heart beats quick, and the mind warms with a thousand interesting ideas. You are carried back, at once, to

the famous robber who first founded it. Without thinking of the waste of time which must have effaced what you are looking for, you cast about your eyes in search of the path by which the Gauls climbed up, and where they were opposed and overthrown by Manlius. You withdraw your eyes, with disdain, from every modern object, and are even displeased with the elegant structure you see before you, and contemplate, with more respect the ruins on which it is founded; because they are more truly Roman.

The two Sphynxes of basalte, at the bottom of the ascent, though excellent specimens of Egyptian sculpture, engage little of your attention. Warm with the glory of Rome, you cannot bestow a thought on the hieroglyphics of Egypt. At sight of the trophies erected in honour of C. Marius, all those bloody scenes acted by the fury of party and demon of revenge, during the most calamitous period of the republic, rush upon the memory; and you regret that Time, who has spared the monuments of this fierce soldier, has destroyed the numerous trophies raised to the Fabii, the Scipio's, and other heroes, distinguished for the virtues of humanity, as well as the talents of Generals. You are struck with the colossal statues of Castor and Pollux, and, in the heat of enthusiasm, confounding the fictions of poetry with historical truth, your heart ap-

plauds their fraternal affection, and thanks them for the timely assistance they afforded the Romans in a battle with the Volsci. You rejoice at their good fortune, which, on earth, has procured them a place in the Capitol, and, in heaven, a seat by Hercules. Horace informs us, that Augustus drinks his nectar, reclined between them and that demigod—

Quos inter Augustus recumbens
Purpureo bibit ore nectar.

Between whom Augustus reclining, quaffs
nectar with purple lips.

From them you move forward, and your admiration is fixed by the animated equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, which naturally brings to your memory that happy period, when the Roman empire was governed by a Prince who, during a long reign, made the good of his subjects the chief object of his government. You proceed to the upper end of the area; your eye is caught by a majestic female figure, in a sitting attitude; you are told it is a Roma Triumphans; you view her with all the warmth of fond enthusiasm, but you recollect that she is no longer Triumphans; you cast an indignant eye on St. Peter's church, to which she also seems to look with indignation. Is there such another instance of the vicissitude of human things; the

proud Mistress of the World under the dominion of a priest? Horace was probably accused of vanity when he wrote these lines:

————— Usque ego postera
Crescam laude recens, dum Capitolium
Scandet cum tacita virgine Pontifex.

My fame ————— shall bloom,
And with unfading youth improve,
While to th' immortal fane of Jove
The vestal maids, in silent state
Ascending, on the Pontiff wait.

FRANCIS.

Yet the poet's works have already out-lived this period fourteen hundred years; and Virgil has transmitted the memory of the friendship and fame of Nisus and Euryalus, the same space of time beyond the period which he himself, in the ardour of poetic hope, had fixed for its limits.

Fortunati ambo si quid mea carmina possunt,
Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet ævo:
Dum domus Æneæ Capitoli immobile saxum
Accolet, imperiumque Pater Romanus habebit.

Hail, happy pair! if fame our verse can give,
From age to age your memory shall live;
Long as th' imperial Capitol shall stand,
Or Rome's majestic Lord the conquer'd world command!
PITT.

In the two wings of the modern palace, called the Campidoglio, the Conservators of the city have apartments; their office is analogous to that of the ancient *Ædiles*. In the main body an Italian nobleman, appointed by the Pope, has his residence, with the title of Senator of Rome; the miserable representation of that Senate which gave laws to the world. The most defaced ruin, the most shapeless heap of antique rubbish in all Rome, cannot convey a feebler image of the building to which they belonged, than this deputy of the Pope does of that august assembly. The beautiful approach to this palace, and all the ornaments which decorate the area before it, cannot detain you long from the back view to which the ancient Capitol fronted. Here you behold the Forum Romanum, now exhibiting a melancholy but interesting view of the devastation wrought by the united force of time, avarice, and bigotry. The first objects which meet your eye, on looking from this side of the hill, are three fine pillars, two-thirds of them buried in the ruins of the old Capitol. They are said to be the remains of the temple of Jupiter Tonans, built by Augustus, in gratitude for having narrowly escaped death from a stroke of lightning. Near these are the remains of Jupiter Stator, consisting of three very elegant small Corinthian pillars, with their entablature; the Temple of Concord, where Cicero assembled the Senate, on the

discovery of Catiline's conspiracy; the Temple of Romulus and Remus, and that of Antoninus and Faustina, just by it, both converted into modern churches; the ruins of the magnificent Temple of Peace, built immediately after the taking of Jerusalem, the Roman empire being then in profound peace. This is said to have been the finest temple in old Rome; part of the materials of Nero's Golden House, which Vespasian pulled down, were used in erecting this grand edifice. The only entire pillar remaining of this temple, was placed by Paul V. before the church of Santa Maria Maggiore. It is a most beautiful fluted Corinthian column, and gives a very high idea of the temple to which it originally belonged. His Holiness has crowned it with an image of the Virgin Mary; and, in the inscription on the pedestal, he gives his reason for choosing a column belonging to the Temple of Peace, as an ornament to a church dedicated to the Virgin.

Ex cujus visceribus Princeps veræ Pacis genitus est.

From whose bowels the Prince of Peace sprung.

Of many triumphal arches which stood formerly in Rome, there are only three now remaining, all of them near the Capitol, and forming entries to the Forum; those of Titus, Septimius Severus, and Constantine. The

last is by much the finest of the three; but its chief beauties are not genuine, nor, properly speaking, its own; they consist of some admirable basso relievos, stolen from the Forum of Trajan, and representing that Emperor's victories over the Dacians. This theft might, perhaps, not have been so notorious to posterity, if the artists of Constantine's time had not added some figures, which make the fraud apparent, and, by their great inferiority, evince the degeneracy of the arts in the interval between the reigns of these two Emperors.

The relievos of the arch of Titus represent the table of shew-bread, the trumpets, the golden candlesticks with seven branches, and other utensils, brought from the Temple of Jerusalem. The quarter which is allotted for the Jews is not at a great distance from this arch. There are about nine thousand of that unfortunate nation at present in Rome; the lineal descendants of those brought captive, by Titus, from Jerusalem. I have been assured that they always cautiously avoid passing through this arch, though it lies directly in their way to the Campo Vaccino, choosing rather to make a circuit, and enter the Forum at another place. I was affected at hearing this instance of sensibility in a people who, whatever other faults they may have, are certainly not deficient in patriotism, and attachment to the religion and customs of their forefathers.

The same delicacy of sentiment is displayed by a poet of their own country, in the 137th psalm, as it is finely translated by Buchanan:

Dum procul a Patria mœsti Babylonis in oris,
 Fluminis ad liquidas forte sedemus aquas;
 Illa animum subiit species miseranda Sionis,
 Et numquam Patrii tecta videnda soli.

* * * * *
 O Solymæ, O adyta, et sacri penetralia templi
 Ullane vos animo debeat hora meo? &c.

You may read the whole; you will perhaps find some poetical beauties which escaped your observation when you heard it sung in churches; but the poet's ardour seems to glow too violently towards the end of the psalm.

LETTER XLI.

Rome.

THERE are many other interesting ruins in and about the Campo Vaccino, besides those I have mentioned; but of some structures which we know formerly stood here, no vestige is now to be seen. This is the case with the arch which was erected in honour of the Fabian family. There is the strongest reason to believe, that the ancient Forum was entirely surrounded with temples, basilicæ, and public buildings of various kinds, and adorned with porticoes and colonades. In the time of the Republic, assemblies of the people were held there, laws were proposed, and justice administered. In it was the Rostrum, from whence the orators harangued the people. All who aspired at dignities came hither to canvass suffrages. The Bankers had their offices near the Forum, as well as those who received the revenues of the Commonwealth; and all kind of business was transacted in this place. In my visits to the Campo Vaccino, I arrange the ancient Forum in the best manner I can, and fix on the particular spot where each edifice stood. In this

I am sometimes a little cramped in room ; for the space between the Palatine Hill and the Capitol is so small, and I am so circumscribed by arches and temples, whose ruins still remain, that I find it impossible to make the Forum Romanum larger than Covent Garden. I looked about for the Via Sacra, where Horace met with his troublesome companion. Some people imagine, this was no other than the Forum itself; but I am clearly of opinion, that the Via Sacra was a street leading to the Forum, and lost in it, as a street in London terminates at a square. I have, at last, fixed on the exact point where it joins the Forum, which is very near the Meta Sudans. If we should ever meet here, I shall convince you by local arguments, that I am in the right; but I fear it would be very tedious, and not at all convincing, to transmit them to you in writing.

As Rome increased in size and number of inhabitants, one Forum was found too small, and many others were erected in process of time; but when we speak of the Forum, without any distinguishing epithet, the ancient one is understood.

The Tarpeian Rock is a continuation of that on which the Capitol was built; I went to that part from which criminals condemned to death were thrown. Mr. Byres has mea-

sured the height; it is exactly fifty-eight feet perpendicular; and he thinks the ground at the bottom, from evident marks, is twenty feet higher than it was originally; so that, before this accumulation of rubbish, the precipice must have been about eighty feet perpendicular. In reading the history of the Romans, the vast idea we form of that people, naturally extends to the city of Rome, the hills on which it was built, and every thing belonging to it. We image to ourselves the Tarpeian Rock as a tremendous precipice; and, if afterwards we ever have an opportunity of actually seeing it, the height falls so short of our expectations, that we are apt to think it a great deal less than it is in reality. A mistake of this kind, joined to a careless view of the place, which is not in itself very interesting, has led Bishop Burnet into the strange assertion, that the Tarpeian Rock is so very low, that a man would think it no great matter to leap down it for his diversion. Criminals thrown from this precipice, were literally thrown out of the city of old Rome into the Campus Martius, which was a large plain, of a triangular shape; two sides of the triangle being formed by the Tiber, and the base by the Capitol, and buildings extending three miles nearly in a parallel line with it. The Campus Martius had its name from a small temple built in it, at a very early period, and dedicated to Mars; or it might have this name

from the military exercises performed there. In this field, the great assemblies of the people, called Census or Lustrum, were held every fifth year; the Consuls, Censors, and Tribunes, were elected; the levies of troops were made; and there the Roman youth exercised themselves in riding, driving the chariot, shooting with the bow, using the sling, darting the javelin, throwing the discus or quoit, in wrestling, running; and when covered with sweat and dust, in consequence of these exercises, they washed their bodies clean by swimming in the Tiber. Horace accuses Lydia of ruining a young man, by keeping him from those manly exercises in which he formerly excelled.

—Cur apricum
 Oderit campum, patiens pulveris atque solis:
 Cur neque militaris
 Inter equales equitet, Gallica nec lupatis
 Temperet ora frænis?
 Cur timet flavum Tiberim tangere?

Why does he hate the sunny plain,
 While he can sun or dust sustain?
 Or why no more, with martial pride,
 Amidst the youthful battle ride,
 And the fierce Gallic steed command,
 With bitted curb, and forming hand?
 Why does he fear the yellow flood?

FRANCIS.

The dead bodies of the most illustrious citizens were also burnt in this field, which was adorned gradually by statues and trophies, erected to the memory of distinguished men. But every feature of its ancient appearance, is now hid by the streets and buildings of modern Rome.

The inhabitants of Rome may be excused for chusing this situation for their houses, though by so doing, they have deprived us of a view of the Campus Martius. But surely they, or their Governors, ought to show more solicitude for preserving the antiquities than they do; and they might, without inconvenience, find some place for a Cow Market, of less importance than the ancient Forum. It is not in their power to restore it to its former splendor, but they might, at least, have prevented its falling back to the state in which Æneas found it, when he came to visit the poor Evander.

Talibus inter se dictis ad tecta subibant
 Pauperis Evandri : passimque armenta videbant
 Romanoque Foro et lautis mugire carinis.

Thus they convers'd on works of ancient fame,
 Till to the monarch's humble courts they came ;
 There oxen stalk'd where palaces were rais'd,
 And bellowing herds in the proud *Forum* graz'd.

PITT.

I have already said, that besides this, there were several Forums in Rome, where Basilicæ were built, justice administered, and business transacted. The Emperors were fond of having such public places named after them. The accounts we have of the Forums of Nerva, and that of Trajan, give the highest idea of their grandeur and elegance; three Corinthian pillars, with their entablature, are all that remain of the former; of the latter, the noble column placed in the middle, still preserves all its original beauty. It consists of twenty-three circular pieces of white marble, horizontally placed one above the other; it is about twelve feet diameter at the bottom, and ten at the top. The plinth of the base is a piece of marble twenty-one feet square. A staircase, consisting of one hundred and eighty-three steps, and sufficiently wide to admit a man to ascend, is cut out of the solid marble, leaving a small pillar in the middle, round which the stair winds from the bottom to the top. I observed a piece broken, as I went up, which shewed, that those large masses of marble have been exquisitely polished on the flat sides, where they are in contact with each other, that the adhesion and strength of the pillar might be the greater. The stairs are lighted by forty-one windows, exceedingly narrow on the outside, that they might not interrupt the connection of the basso relievos, but which gradually widen within, and by that means

give sufficient light. The base of the column is ornamented with basso relievos, representing trophies of Dacian armour. The most memorable events of Trajan's expedition against the Dacians, are admirably wrought in a continued spiral line from the bottom of the column to the top. The figures towards the top, are too far removed from the eye to be seen perfectly. To have rendered them equally visible with those below, it would have been necessary to have made them larger proportionably as they ascended. Viewed from any considerable distance, all the sculpture is lost, and a plain fluted pillar, of the same proportions, would have had as fine an effect. But such a frugal plan would not have been so glorious to the Prince, whose victories are engraven, or so interesting to the legionary soldiers, many of whom, no doubt, are here personally represented. Besides, it would not now be near so valuable a monument, in the eyes of antiquarians, or so useful a study to sculptors and painters, who have occasion to represent the military dress of the Romans, or the costume of the East in that age. Exclusive of the statue, this beautiful pillar is a hundred and twenty feet high. The ashes of Trajan were deposited in an urn at the bottom, and his statue placed at the top. Pope Sixtus the Fifth, in the room of the Emperor's, has placed a statue of St. Peter upon this column. I observed to a gentleman, with whom I visited

this pillar, that I thought there was not much propriety in placing the figure of St. Peter upon a monument, representing the victories, and erected in honour of the Emperor Trajan. "There is some propriety, however," replied he coldly, "in having made the statue of *brass*."

L E T T E R XLII.

Rome.

I Have been witness to the beatification of a Saint ; he was of the order of St. Francis, and a great many brethren of that order were present, and in very high spirits on the occasion. There are a greater number of ecclesiastics beatified, and canonized, than any other order of men. In the first place, because, no doubt, they deserve it better ; and also, because they are more solicitous to have Saints taken from among men of their own profession, and particular order, than people in other situations in life are. Every monk imagines, it reflects personal honour on himself, when one of his order is canonized. Soldiers, lawyers, and physicians, would probably be happy to see some of their brethren distinguished in the same manner ; that they have not had this gratification of late years, may be imputed to the difficulty of finding suitable characters among them. Ancient history, indeed, makes mention of some commanders of armies who were very great saints ; but I have heard of no physician who acquired that title since the days

of St. Luke ; or of a single lawyer, of any age or country.

A picture of the present Expectant, a great deal larger than life, had been hung up on the front of St. Peter's church, several days before the beatification took place. This ceremony was also announced by printed papers, distributed by the happy brethren of St. Francis. On the day of the solemnity, his Holiness, a considerable number of Cardinals, many other ecclesiastics, all the Capuchin Friars in Rome, and a great concourse of spectators attended. The ceremony was performed in St. Peter's church. An ecclesiastic of my acquaintance procured us a very convenient place for seeing the whole. The ceremony of beatification is a previous step to that of canonization. The Saint, after he is beatified, is entitled to more distinction in Heaven than before ; but he has not the power of freeing souls from purgatory till he has been canonized ; and therefore is not addressed in prayer till he has obtained the second honour. On the present occasion, a long discourse was pronounced by a Franciscan Friar, setting forth the holy life which this Expectant had led upon earth, his devotions, his voluntary penances, and his charitable actions ; and a particular enumeration was made, of certain miracles he had performed when alive, and others which had been performed after his

death by his bones. The most remarkable miracle, by himself in person, was, his replenishing a lady's cupboard with bread, after her housekeeper, at the Saint's instigation, had given all the bread of the family to the poor.

This business is carried on in the manner of a law-suit. The Devil is supposed to have an interest in preventing men from being made Saints. That all justice may be done, and that Satan may have his due, an advocate is employed to plead against the pretensions of the Saint Expectant, and the person thus employed is denominated by the people, the Devil's Advocate. He calls in question the miracles said to have been wrought by the Saint and his bones, and raises as many objections to the proofs brought of the purity of his life and conversation as he can. It is the business of the Advocate on the other side, to obviate and refute these cavils. The controversy was carried on in Latin. It drew out to a great length, and was by no means amusing. Your friend Mr. R——y, who sat near me, losing patience, from the length of the ceremony, and some twitches of the gout, which he felt at that moment, whispered me, "I wish, from my heart, the Devil's Advocate were with his client, and this everlasting Saint fairly in Heaven, that we might get away." The whole party, of which I

made one, were seized with frequent and long continued yawnings, which I imagine was observed by some of the Cardinals who sat opposite to us. They caught the infection, and although they endeavoured to conceal their gaping under their purple robes, yet it seemed to spread and communicate itself gradually over the whole assembly, the Franciscan Friars excepted; they were too deeply interested in the issue of the dispute, to think it tedious. As often as the Devil's Advocate started an objection, evident signs of impatience, contempt, surprise, indignation, and resentment, appeared in the countenances of the venerable brotherhood, according to their different characters and tempers. One shook his head, and whispered his neighbour; another raised his chin, and pushed up his under-lip with a disdainful smile; a third started, opened his eyelids as wide as he could, and held up both his hands, with his fingers extended; a fourth raised his thumb to his mouth, bit the nail with a grin, and jerked the thumb from his teeth towards the adversary; a fifth stared, in a most expressive manner, at the Pope, and then fixed his eyes, frowning, on the Advocate. All were in agitation, till the Saint's Counsel began to speak, when a profound silence took place, and the moment he had made his answer, their countenances brightened, a smile of satisfaction spread around, and they nodded and shook.

their beards at each other with mutual congratulations. In the mean time, the Cardinals, and the other auditors, who were not asleep, continued yawning; for my own part, I was kept awake only by the interlude of grimaces, played off by the Capuchin, between the arguments. Exclusive of these, the making a Saint of a Capuchin, is the dullest business I ever was witness to. I hope the man himself enjoys much felicity since the ceremony, in which case no good-natured person will grudge the tedium and fatigue which he suffered on the occasion. I ought to have told you, that the Advocate's reasoning was all in vain; the Devil lost his cause, without the possibility of appeal. The Saint's claim being confirmed, he was admitted into all the privileges of beatification; the Convent defraying the expence of the process.

As we returned, Mr. R——y asked, if I recollected the Saint's name. I said, I did not. "We must inform ourselves," said he; "for when I meet him above, I shall certainly claim some merit with him, from having done penance at his beatification*."

*I have been since informed, this new Saint is called St. Buonaventura; he was by birth a Neapolitan.

LETTER XLIII.

Rome.

TRavellers are too apt to form hasty, and for the most part, unfavourable opinions of national characters. Finding the customs and sentiments of the inhabitants of the foreign countries through which they pass, very different from their own, they are ready to consider them as erroneous, and conclude, that those who act and think in a manner so opposite to themselves, must be either knaves, fools, or both. In such hasty decisions they are often confirmed by the partial representations of a few of their own countrymen, or of other foreigners who are established in some profession in those countries, and who have an interest in giving bad impressions of the people among whom they reside.

That the Italians have an uncommon share of natural sagacity and acuteness, is pretty generally allowed; but they are accused of being deceitful, perfidious, and revengeful; and the frequent assassinations and murders which happen in the streets of the great towns

in Italy, are brought as proofs of this charge. I have not remained a sufficient length of time in Italy, supposing I were, in all other respects, qualified to decide on the character of the inhabitants; but from the opportunities I have had, my idea of the Italians is, that they are an ingenious sober people, with quick feelings, and therefore irritable; but when unprovoked, of a mild and obliging disposition, and less subject to avarice, envy, or repining at the narrowness of their own circumstances, and the comparative wealth of others, than most other nations. The murders which occasionally happen, proceed from a deplorable want of police, and some very impolitic customs, which have, from various causes, crept among them, and would produce more frequent examples of the same kind, if they prevailed to the same degree, in some other countries. I beg you will keep in your mind, that the assassinations which disgrace Italy, whatever may have been the case formerly, are now entirely confined to the accidental squabbles which occur among the rabble. No such thing has been known for many years past among people of condition, or the middle rank of citizens; and with regard to the stabbings which happen among the vulgar, they almost always proceed from an immediate impulse of wrath, and are seldom the effect of previous malice, or a premeditated plan of revenge. I do not know whether the stories we have of mercenary

bravos, men who formerly are supposed to have made it their profession to assassinate, and live by the murders they committed, are founded in truth; but I am certain, that at present there is no such trade in this country. That the horrid practice of drawing the knife and stabbing each other, still subsists among the Italian vulgar, I am persuaded, is owing to the scandalous impunity with which it is treated. The asylum which churches and convents offer to criminals, operates against the peace of society, and tends to the encouragement of this shocking custom in two different manners: First, it increases the criminal's hopes of escaping; secondly, it diminishes, in vulgar minds, the idea of the atrocity of the crime. When the populace see a murderer lodged within the sacred walls of a church, protected and fed by men who are revered on account of their profession, and the supposed sanctity of their lives; must not this weaken the horror which mankind naturally have for such a crime, and which it ought to be the aim of every government to augment?

Those who are willing to admit that this last consideration may have the effect I have ascribed to it, on the minds of the vulgar, still contend, that the hopes of impunity can have little influence in keeping up the practice of stabbing; because, as has been already observed, these stabbings are always in conse-

quence of accidental quarrels and sudden bursts of passion, in which men have no consideration about their future safety. All I have to say in answer is, that if the observations I have been able to make on the human character are well founded, there are certain considerations which never entirely lose their influence on the minds of men, even when they are in the height of passion. I do not mean that there are not instances of men being thrown into such paroxysms of fury, as totally deprive them of reflection, and make them act like madmen, without any regard to consequences ; but extraordinary instances, which depend on peculiarities of constitution, and very singular circumstances, cannot destroy the force of an observation which, generally speaking, is found just. We every day see men, who have the character of being of the most ungovernable tempers, who are apt to fly into violent fits of passion upon the most trivial occasions, yet, in the midst of all their rage, and when they seem to be entirely blinded by fury, are still capable of making distinctions ; which plainly evince, that they are not so very much blinded by anger, as they would seem to be. When people are subject to violent fits of choler, and to an unrestrained licence of words and actions, only in the company of those who, from their unfortunate situation in life, are obliged to bear such abuse, it is a plain proof that considerations which

regard their own personal safety, have some influence on their minds in the midst of their fury, and instruct them to be mad *certa ratione modoque*. This is frequently unknown to those choleric people themselves, while it is fully evident to every person of observation around them. What violent fits of passion do some men indulge themselves in against their slaves and servants, which they always impute to the ungovernable nature of their own tempers, of which, however, they display the most perfect command upon much greater provocations given by their superiors, equals, or by any set of people who are not obliged to bear their ill humour? How often do we see men who are agreeable, cheerful, polite, and good-tempered to the world in general, gloomy, peevish, and passionate, to their wives and children? When you happen to be a witness to any instance of unprovoked domestic rage, into which they have allowed themselves to be transported, they will very probably lament their misfortune, in having more ungovernable tempers than the rest of mankind. But if a man does not speak and act with the same degree of violence on an equal provocation, without considering whether it comes from *superior, equal, or dependant*, he plainly shews that he can govern his temper, and that his not doing it on particular occasions proceeds from the basest and most despicable of all motives.

I remember, when I was on the continent with the English army, having seen an officer beat a soldier very unmercifully with his cane: I was then standing with some officers, all of whom seemed to be filled with indignation at this mean exercise of power. When the person who had performed the intrepid exploit came to join the circle, he plainly perceived marks of disapprobation in every countenance; for which reason he thought it necessary to apologize for what he had done. "Nothing," says he, "provokes me so much as a fellow's looking saucily when I speak to him. I have told that man so fifty times; and yet, on my reprimanding him just now, for having one of the buttons of his waistcoat broken, he *looked saucily* full in my face; which threw me into such a passion, that I could not help threshing him.—How-ever, I am sorry for it, because he has the character of being an honest man, and has always done his duty, as a soldier, very well. How much," continued he, "are those people to be envied, who have a full command of their tempers!"

"No man can command it more perfectly than yourself," said a gentleman who was then in the foot-guards, and has since been a general officer.

“ I often endeavour to do it,” replied the choleric man, “ but always find it out of my power. I have not philosophy enough to check the violence of my temper when once I am provoked.”

“ You certainly do yourself injustice, Sir,” said the officer; “ no person seems to have their passions under better discipline. With your brother officers, I never saw you, in a single instance, break through the rules of decorum, or allow your anger to overcome your politeness to them.”

“ They never provoked me,” said the passionate man.

“ Provoked you !” rejoined the other; yes, Sir, often, and in a much greater degree than the poor soldier. Do not I, at this moment, give you ten thousand times more provocation than he, or any of the unfortunate men under your command, whom you are so apt to beat and abuse, ever did?—and yet you seem perfectly master of your temper.”

There was no way left by which the choleric man could prove the contrary, except by knocking the other down; but that was a method of convincing his antagonist which he did not think proper to use. A more intrepid

man, in the same predicament, would very probably have had recourse to that expedient; but in general mankind are able, even in the violence of passion, to estimate, in some measure, the risk they run; and the populace of every country are more readily kindled to that *inferior* degree of rage, which makes them lose their horror for the crime of murder, and disregard the life of a fellow-creature, than to that *higher* pitch, which deprives them of all consideration for their own personal safety.

In England, Germany, or France, a man knows, that if he commits a murder, every person around him will, from that instant, become his enemy, and use every means to seize him, and bring him to justice. He knows that he will be immediately carried to prison, and put to an ignominious death, amidst the execrations of his countrymen. Impressed with these sentiments, and with the natural horror for murder which such sentiments augment, the populace of those countries hardly ever have recourse to stabbing in their accidental quarrels, however they may be inflamed with anger and rage. The lowest blackguard in the streets of London will not draw a knife against an antagonist far superior to himself in strength. He will fight him fairly with his fists as long as he can, and bear the severest drubbing, rather than use a means of defence which is held in detestation by his

countrymen, and which would bring himself to the gallows.

The murders committed in Germany, France, or England, are therefore comparatively few in number, and happen generally in consequence of a pre-concerted plan, in which the murderers have taken measures for their escape or concealment, without which they know that inevitable death awaits them. In Italy the case is different; an Italian is not under the influence of so strong an impression, that certain execution must be the consequence of his committing a murder; he is at less pains to restrain the wrath which he feels kindling within his breast; he allows his rage full scope; and, if hard pressed by the superior strength of an enemy, he does not scruple to extricate himself by a thrust of his knife; he knows, that if some of the *Sbirri* are not present, no other person will seize him; for *that* office is held in such detestation by the Italian populace, that none of them will perform any part of its functions. The murderer is therefore pretty certain of gaining some church or convent, where he will be protected, till he can compound the matter with the relations of the deceased, or escape to some of the other Italian States; which is no very difficult matter, as the dominions of none are very extensive.

Besides, when any of these assassins has not had the good fortune to get within the portico of a church before he is seized by the Sbirri, and when he is actually carried to prison, it is not a very difficult matter for his friends or relations to prevail, by their entreaties and tears, on some of the Cardinals or Princes, to interfere in his favour, and endeavour to obtain his pardon. If this is the case, and I am assured from authority which fully convinces me, that it is, we need be no longer surprised that murder is more common among the Italian populace than among the common people of any other country. As soon as asylums for such criminals are abolished, and justice is allowed to take its natural course, that foul stain will be entirely effaced from the national character of the modern Italians. This is already verified in the Grand Duke of Tuscany's dominions. The same edict which declared that churches and convents should no longer be places of refuge for murderers, has totally put a stop to the use of the stiletto; and the Florentine populace now fight with the same blunt weapons that are used by the common people of other nations.

I am afraid you will think I have been a little prolix on this occasion; but I had two objects in view, and was solicitous about both. The first was to shew, that the treacherous and perfidious disposition imputed to the Ita-

lians, is, like most other national reflections, ill founded; and that the facts brought in proof of the accusation, proceed from other causes: the second was, to demonstrate to certain choleric gentlemen, who pretend to have ungovernable tempers, as an excuse for rendering every creature dependent on them, miserable, that in their furious fits they not only behave ridiculously, but basely. In civil life, in England, they have the power of only making themselves contemptible; but in the army or navy, or in our islands, they often render themselves the objects of horror.

L E T T E R XLIV.

Rome.

THEFTS and crimes which are not capital are punished at Rome, and some other towns of Italy, by imprisonment, or by what is called the Cord. This last is performed in the street. The culprit's hands are bound behind by a cord, which runs on a pulley; he is then drawn up twenty or thirty feet from the ground, and, if lenity is intended, he is let down smoothly in the same manner he was drawn up. In this operation the whole weight of the criminal's body is sustained by his hands, and a strong man can bear the punishment inflicted in this manner without future inconveniency; for the strength of the muscles of his arms enables him to keep his hands pressed on the middle of his back, and his body hangs in a kind of horizontal position. But when they intend to be severe, the criminal is allowed to fall from the greatest height to which he had been raised, and the fall is abruptly checked in the middle; by which means the hands and arms are immediately pulled above the head, both shoulders are dislocated, and the

body swings, powerless, in a perpendicular line. It is a cruel and injudicious punishment, and left too much in the power of those who superintend the execution, to make it severe or not, as they are inclined.

Breaking on the wheel is never used in Rome for any crime; but they sometimes put in practice another mode of execution, which is much more shocking in appearance than cruel in reality. The criminal being seated on a scaffold, the executioner, who stands behind, strikes him on the head with a hammer of a particular construction, which deprives him, at once, of all sensation. When it is certain that he is completely dead, the executioner, with a large knife, cuts his throat from ear to ear. This last part of the ceremony is thought to make a stronger impression on the minds of the spectators, than the bloodless blow which deprives the criminal of life. Whether the advantages resulting from this are sufficient to compensate for shocking the public eye with such abominable sights, I very much question.

Executions are not frequent at Rome, for the reasons already given: there has been only one since our arrival; and those who are of the most forgiving disposition will acknowledge, that this criminal was not put to death till the measure of his iniquity was sufficiently

full; he was condemned to be hanged for his fifth murder. I shall give you some account of his execution, and the ceremonies which accompanied it, because they throw some light on the sentiments and character of the people.

First of all, there was a procession of priests, one of whom carried a crucifix on a pole hung with black; they were followed by a number of people in long gowns which covered them from head to foot, with holes immediately before the face, through which those in this disguise could see every thing perfectly, while they could not be recognized by the spectators. They are of the Company della Misericordia, which is a society of persons who, from motives of piety, think it a duty to visit criminals under sentence of death, endeavour to bring them to a proper sense of their guilt, assist them in making the best use of the short time they have to live, and who never forsake them till the moment of their execution. People of the first rank are of this society, and devoutly perform the most laborious functions of it. All of them carried lighted torches, and a few shook tin boxes, into which the multitude put money to defray the expence of masses for the soul of the criminal. This is considered by many as the most meritorious kind of charity; and some, whose circumstances do not permit them to bestow much, confine all the expence they can

afford in charity, to the single article of purchasing masses to be said in behalf of those who have died without leaving a *farthing* to *save their souls*. The rich, say they, who have much superfluous wealth, may throw away part of it in acts of *temporal* charity; but it is, in a more particular manner, the duty of those who have little to give, to take care that this little shall be applied to the most beneficial purposes. What is the relieving a few poor families from the frivolous distresses of cold and hunger, in comparison of freeing them from many years burning in fire and brimstone? People are reminded of this essential kind of charity, not only by the preachers, but also by inscriptions upon the walls of particular churches and convents; and sometimes the aid of the pencil is called in to awaken the compunction of the unfeeling and hard-hearted. On the external walls of some convents, immediately above the box into which you are directed to put your money, views of purgatory are painted in the most flaming colours, where people are seen in all the agonies of burning, raising their indignant eyes to those unmindful relations and acquaintances, who, rather than part with a little money, allow them to remain in those abodes of torment. One can hardly conceive how any mortal can pass such a picture without emptying his purse into the box, if, by so doing, he believed he could redeem, I will not say a human creature, but even a poor

incorrigible dog, or vicious horse, from such a dreadful situation. As the Italians in general seem to have more sensibility than any people I am acquainted with, and as I see some, who cannot be supposed totally in want of money, pass by those pictures every day without putting a farthing into the box, I must impute this stinginess to a lack of faith rather than of sensibility. Such unmindful passengers are probably of the number of those who begin to suspect that the money of the living can be of little use to the dead. Being absolutely certain that it gives themselves much pain to part with it in this world, and doubtful whether it will have any efficacy in abridging the pains of their friends in the other, they hesitate for some time between the two risks, that of losing their own money, and that of allowing their neighbour's soul to continue in torture; and it would appear that those sceptics generally decide the dispute in favour of the money.

But in such a case as that which I have been describing, where a poor wretch is just going to be thrust by violence out of one world, and solicits a little money to secure him a tolerable reception in another, the passions of the spectators are too much agitated for cold reasoning, and the most niggardly sceptic throws his mite into the boxes of the *Compagnia della Misericordia*. Immediately after them came the malefactor himself, seated in a cart, with a

Capuchin Friar on each side of him. The hangman, with two assistants, dressed in scarlet jackets, walked by the cart. This procession having moved slowly round the gallows, which was erected in the Piazza del Popolo, the culprit descended from the cart, and was led to a house in the neighbourhood, attended by the two Capuchins. He remained there about half an hour, was confessed, and received absolution; after which he came out, exclaiming to the populace to join in prayers for his soul, and walked with a hurried pace to the gallows; the hangman and his assistants having hold of his arms, they supported him up the ladder, the unhappy man repeating prayers as fast as he could utter till he was turned off. He was not left a moment to himself. The executioner stepped from the ladder, and stood with a foot on each of his shoulders, supporting himself in that situation with his hands on the top of the gallows, the assistants at the same time pulling down the malefactor's legs, so that he must have died in an instant. The executioner, in a short time, slid to the ground along the dead body, as a sailor slides on a rope. They then removed the cloth which covered his face, and twirled the body round with great rapidity, as if their intention had been to divert the mob; who, however, did not shew any disposition to be amused in that manner. The multitude beheld the scene with silent awe and compassion. During the

time appointed by law for the body to hang, all the members of the procession, with the whole apparatus of torches, crucifixes, and Capuchins, went into a neighbouring church, at the corner of the Strada del Babbuino, and remained there till a mass was said for the soul of the deceased; and when that was concluded, they returned in procession to the gallows, with a coffin covered with black cloth. On their approach, the executioner, with his assistants, hastily retired among the crowd, and were no more allowed to come near the body. The condemned person having now paid the forfeit due to his crimes, was no longer considered as an object of hatred; his dead body was therefore rescued from the contaminating touch of those who are held by the populace in the greatest abhorrence. Two persons in masks, and with black gowns, mounted the ladder and cut the rope, while others below, of the same society, received the body, and put it carefully into the coffin. An old woman then said, with an exalted voice, “Adeffo spero che l’anima sua sia in paradiso;” “Now I hope his soul is in heaven;” and the multitude around seemed all inclined to hope the same.

The serious and compassionate manner in which the Roman populace beheld this execution, forms a presumption of the gentleness of

their dispositions. The crimes of which this man had been guilty must naturally have raised their indignation, and his profession had a tendency to increase and keep it up; for he was one of the Sbirri, all of whom are held in the most perfect detestation by the common people; yet the moment they saw this object of their hatred in the character of a poor condemned man, about to suffer for his crimes, all their animosity ceased; no rancour was displayed, nor the least insult offered, which could disturb him in his last moments. They viewed him with the eyes of pity and forgiveness, and joined, with earnestness, in prayers for his future welfare.

The manner in which this man was put to death was, no doubt, uncommonly mild, when compared with the atrocity of his guilt; yet I am convinced, that the solemn circumstances which accompanied his execution, made a greater impression on the minds of the populace, and would as effectually deter them from the crimes for which he was condemned, as if he had been broken alive on the wheel, and the execution performed in a less solemn manner.

Convinced as I am that all horrid and refined cruelty in the execution of criminals is, at best, unnecessary, I never heard of any thing of that nature without horror and in-

dignation. Other methods, no way connected with the sufferings of the prisoner, equally deter from the crime, and, in all other respects, have a better influence on the minds of the multitude. The procession described above, I plainly perceived, made a very deep impression. I thought I saw more people affected by it than I have formerly observed among a much greater crowd, who were gathered to see a dozen or fourteen of their fellow-creatures dragged to the same death for house-breaking and highway robbery, mere venial offences, in comparison of what this Italian had perpetrated. The attendance of the Capuchins, the crucifixes, the Society of Misericordia, the ceremony of confession, all have a tendency to strike the mind with awe, and keep up the belief of a future state; and when the multitude behold so many people employed, and so much pains taken, to save the soul of one of the most worthless of mankind, they must think, that the saving of a soul is a matter of great importance, and therefore naturally infer, that the sooner they begin to take care of their own, the better. But when criminals are carried to execution with little or no solemnity, amidst the shouts of an unconcerned rabble, who applaud them in proportion to the degree of indifference and impenitence they display, and consider the whole scene as a source of amusement; how can such exhibitions make any useful impression, or terrify the

thoughtless and desperate from any wicked propensity? If there is a country in which great numbers of young inconsiderate creatures are, six or eight times every year, carried to execution in this tumultuous, unaffecting manner, might not a stranger conclude, that the view of the legislature was to cut off guilty individuals in the least alarming way possible, that others might not be deterred from following their example?

LETTER XLV.

Rome.

THOSE who have a real pleasure in contemplating the remains of antique, and the noblest specimens of modern architecture, who are struck with the inimitable delicacy and expression of Greek sculpture, and wish to compare it with the most successful efforts of the moderns, and who have an unwearied admiration of the charms of painting, may, provided they have not more important avocations elsewhere, employ a full year with satisfaction in this city.

What is called a regular course with an Antiquarian, generally takes up about six weeks; employing three hours a-day, you may, in that time, visit all the churches, palaces, villas, and ruins, worth seeing, in or near Rome. But after having made this course, however distinctly every thing may have been explained by the Antiquarian, if you do not visit the most interesting again and again, and reflect on them at more leisure, your labour will be of little use; for the objects are so various, and

those you see on one day, so apt to be effaced by, or confounded with, those you behold on another, that you must carry away a very faint and indistinct recollection of any. Many travellers have experienced the truth of this observation.

One young English gentleman, who happens not to be violently smitten with the charms of virtù, and scorns to affect what he does not feel, thought that two or three hours a-day, for a month or six weeks together, was rather too much time to bestow on a pursuit in which he felt no pleasure, and saw very little utility. The only advantage which, in his opinion, the greater part of us reaped from our six weeks tour, was, that we *could say*, we had seen a great many fine things which he had not seen. This was a superiority which he could not brook, and which he resolved we should not long enjoy. Being fully convinced, that the business might be, with a little exertion, dispatched in a very short space of time, he prevailed on a proper person to attend him; ordered a post-chaise and four horses to be ready early in the morning, and driving through churches, palaces, villas, and ruins, with all possible expedition, he fairly saw, in two days, all that we had beheld during our crawling course of six weeks. I found afterwards, by the list he kept of what he had seen, that we had not the advantage of him in a sin-

gle picture, or the most mutilated remnant of a statue.

I do not propose this young gentleman's plan, as the very best possible; but of this I am certain, that he can give as satisfactory an account of the curiosities of Rome, as some people of my acquaintance who viewed them with *equal* sensibility, and at a great deal more leisure.

Those travellers who cannot remain a considerable time at Rome, would do well to get a judicious list of the most interesting objects in architecture, sculpture, and painting, that are to be seen here; they ought to visit these frequently, and these only, by which means they will acquire a strong and distinct impression of what they see; instead of that transient and confused idea which a vast number of things, viewed superficially, and in a hurry, leave in the mind. After they have examined, with due attention, the most magnificent and best preserved remains of ancient architecture, very few have satisfaction in viewing a parcel of old bricks, which, they are told, formed the foundation of the baths of some of the Emperors. And there are not many who would regret their not having seen great numbers of statues and pictures of inferior merit, when they had beheld all that are universally esteemed the best. Would it not be highly judi-

ous, therefore, in the greatest number of travellers, without abridging the usual time of the course, to make it much less comprehensive?

Besides churches, there are about thirty palaces in Rome, as full of pictures as the walls can bear. The Borgheze Palace alone is said to contain above sixteen hundred, all original. There are also ten or twelve villas in the neighbourhood of this city, which are usually visited by strangers. You may judge from this, what a task they undertake, who resolve to go through the whole; and what kind of an idea they are likely to carry away, who perform this task during a stay of a few months. Of the villas, the Pineiana, which belongs to the Borgheze family, is the most remarkable. I shall confine myself to a few cursory remarks on some of the most esteemed curiosities it contains. The Hermaphrodite, of which you have seen so many prints and models, is accounted by many, one of the finest pieces of sculpture in the world. The mattress, upon which this fine figure reclines, is the work of the Cavalier Bernini, and nothing can be more admirably executed. Some critics say, he has performed his task *too well*, because the admiration of the spectator is divided between the statue and the mattress. This, however, ought not to be imputed as a fault to that great artist; since he condescended to make it

at all, it was his business to make it as perfect as possible. I have heard of an artist at Versailles in a different line, who attempted something of the same nature; he had exerted all his abilities in making a periwig for a celebrated preacher, who was to preach on a particular occasion before the court; and he imagined he had succeeded to a miracle. "I'll be hanged," said he to one of his companions, "if his Majesty, or any man of taste, will pay much attention to the *sermon* to-day."

Among the antiques, there is a Centaur in marble, with a Cupid mounted on his back. The latter has the cestus of Venus, and the ivy crown of Bacchus, in allusion to beauty and wine; he beats the Centaur with his fist, and seems to kick with violence to drive him along. The Centaur throws back his head and eyes with a look of remorse, as if he were unwilling, though forced, to proceed. The execution of this group, is admired by those who look upon it merely as a *jeu d'esprit*; but it acquires additional merit, when considered as allegorical of men who are hurried on by the violence of their passions, and lament their own weakness, while they find themselves unable to resist.

There is another figure which claims attention, more on account of the allegory than the sculpture. This is a small statue of Venus

Cloacina, trampling on an impregnated uterus, and tearing the wings of Cupid. The allegory indicates, that prostitution is equally destructive of generation and love. Keyßler mentioning this, calls it a statue of Venus, lamenting her rashness in clipping Cupid's wings.

The statue called Zingara, or the Fortune-teller, is antique, all but the head, which is Bernini's; the face has a strong expression of that sly shrewdness, which belongs to those whose trade it is to impose on the credulity of the vulgar; with a great look of some modern gypsies I have seen, who have imposed most egregiously on the self-love and credulity of the great.

Seneca dying in the Bath, in touchstone; round his middle is a girdle of yellow marble; he stands in a basin of blueish marble lined with porphyry; his knees seem to bend under him, from weakness; his features denote faintness, languor, and the approach of death; the eyes are enamelled, which gives the countenance a fierce and disagreeable look. Colouring the eyes always has a bad effect in sculpture; they form too violent a contrast with the other features, which remain of the natural colour of the marble. When the eyes are enamelled, it is requisite that all the face should be painted, to produce the agreeable harmony of life.

The Faun dandling an infant Bacchus, is one of the gayest figures that can be imagined.

In this Villa, there are also some highly esteemed pieces by Bernini. Æneas carrying his father; David slinging the stone at Goliath; and Apollo pursuing Daphne: the last is generally reckoned Bernini's master-piece; for my part, I have so bad a taste as to prefer the second. The figure of David is nervous, with great anatomical justness, and a strong expression of keenness and exertion to hit his mark, and kill his enemy; but the countenance of David wants dignity. An ancient artist, perhaps, could not have given more ardour, but he would have given more nobleness to the features of David. Some may say, that as he was but a shepherd, it was proper he should have the look of a clown; but it ought to be remembered, that David was a very extraordinary man; and if the artist who formed the Belvedere Apollo, or if Agasias the Ephesian, had treated the same subject, I imagine they would have rendered their work more interesting, by blending the noble air of an hero with the simple appearance of a shepherd. The figures of Apollo and Daphne err in a different manner. The face and figure of Apollo are deficient in simplicity; the noble simplicity of the best antique statues: he runs with affected graces, and his astonishment at the beginning transformation of his mistress is not, in my

opinion, naturally expressed, but seems rather the exaggerated astonishment of an actor. The form and shape of Daphne are delicately executed; but in her face, beauty is, in some degree, sacrificed to the expression of terror; her features are too much distorted by fear. An ancient artist would have made her less afraid, that she might have been more beautiful. In expressing terror, pain, and other impressions, there is a point where the beauty of the finest countenance ends, and deformity begins. I am indebted to Mr. Locke for this observation. In some conversations I had with him at Collogny, on the subject of Sculpture, that gentleman remarked, that it was in the skilful and temperate exertion of her powers, in this noblest province of the art, *expression* that ancient sculpture so much excelled the modern. She knew its limits, and had ascertained them with precision. As far as expression would go hand in hand with grace and beauty, in subjects intended to excite sympathy, she indulged her chisel; but where agony threatened to induce distortion, and obliterate beauty, she wisely set bounds to imitation, remembering, that though it may be moral to pity ugliness in distress, it is more natural to pity beauty in the same situation; and that her business was not to give the strongest representation of nature, but the representation which would interest us most. That ingenious gentleman, I remember, observed at the same time, that the Greek

artists have been accused of having sacrificed character too much to technical proportion. He continued to observe, that what is usually called character in a face, is probably excess in some of its parts, and particularly of those which are under the influence of the mind, the leading passion of which marks some feature for its own. A perfectly symmetrical face bears no mark of the influence of either the passions or the understanding, and reminds you of Prometheus's clay without his fire. On the other hand, the moderns, by sacrificing too liberally those technical proportions, which, when religiously observed, produce beauty, to expression, have generally lost the very point which they contended for. They seemed to think, that when a passion was to be expressed, it could not be expressed too strongly; and that sympathy always followed in an exact proportion with the strength of the passion, and the force of its expression. But passions, in their extreme, instead of producing sympathy, generally excite feelings diametrically opposite. A vehement and clamorous demand of pity is received with neglect, and sometimes with disgust; whilst a patient and silent acquiescence under the pressure of mental affliction, or severe bodily pain, finds every heart in unison with its sufferings. The ancients knew to what extent expression may be carried, with good effect. The author of the famous Laocoon, in the Vatican, knew where

to stop, and if the figure had been alone, it would have been perfect; there is exquisite anguish in the countenance, but it is borne in silence, and without distortion of features. Puget thought he could go beyond the author of Laocoon; he gave voice to his Milo; he made him roaring with pain, and lost the sympathy of the spectator. In confirmation of this doctrine, Mr. Locke desired, that when I should arrive at Rome, I would examine, with attention, the celebrated statue of Niobe, in the Villa de Medici. I have done so again and again, and find his remarks most strikingly just. The author of the Niobe has had the judgment not to exhibit all the distress which he might have placed in her countenance. This consummate artist was afraid of disturbing her features too much, knowing full well, that the point where he was to expect the most sympathy was there, where distress co-operated with beauty, and where *our pity met our love*. Had he sought it one step farther, in *expression*, he had lost it. It is unjust, you will say, that men should not sympathise with homely women in distress, in the same degree as they do with the beautiful. That is very true; but it is the business of the sculptor to apply his art to men as he finds them, not as they ought to be. Beside, this principle has full force, and is strictly true, only in sculpture and painting. For, in real life, a woman may engage a man's esteem and affections by a thousand fine qualities, and

a thousand endearing ties, though she is entirely deficient in beauty.

This Villa is also enriched by one of the most animated statues in the world, and which, in the opinion of many men of taste, comes nearest, and in the judgment of some, equals the Apollo of the Vatican. I mean the statue of the fighting Gladiator. It is difficult, however, to compare two pieces whose merits are so different. The Apollo is full of grace, majesty, and conscious superiority; he has shot his arrow, and knows its success. There is, indeed, a strong expression of indignation, which opens his lips, distends his nostrils, and contracts his brows; but it is the indignation of a superior being, who punishes while he scorns the efforts of his enemy. The Gladiator, on the contrary, full of fire and youthful courage, opposes an enemy that he does not fear; but whom, it is evident, he thinks worthy of his utmost exertion; every limb, nerve, and sinew, is in action; his ardent features indicate the strongest desire, the highest expectation, but not a perfect security of victory. His shape is elegant as well as nervous, expressive of agility as well as strength, and equally distant from the brawny strength of the Farnesian Hercules, and the effeminate softness of the Belvedere Antinous. The action is transitive (if the term may be so used), and preparatory only to another disposition of body

and limbs, which are to enable him to strike, and which he cannot do in his present position; for the moment his right arm crossed the perpendicular line of his right leg, the whole figure would be out of its centre. His action seems a combination of the defensive and offensive; defensive in the *present* moment, the left arm being advanced to secure the adversary's blow; and preparing for offence in the next, the left leg already taking its spring to advance in order to give the figure a centre, which may enable it to strike, without risk of falling, if the blow should not take place. The action of the right arm, however, will always remain in some degree problematical, the ancient being lost; by whom the modern arm is restored, I never heard.

Though this fine figure generally goes by the name of the fighting Gladiator, some antiquarians cannot allow, that ever it was intended to represent a person of that profession, but a Victor at the Olympic games; and allege, that Agasias of Ephesus, the sculptor's name, being inscribed upon the pedestal, supports their opinion, because the Greeks never used gladiators. But I fear this argument has little weight; for the Greek slaves at Rome put their name to their work; and the free Greek artists, working in Greece, in public works, found difficulty in obtaining the

same indulgence. Those who wish to rescue this statue from the ignoble condition of a common Gladiator, say further, that he looks up as if his adversary were on horseback, adding, that gladiators never fought on foot against horsemen on the Arena. Here again, I am afraid, they are mistaken. He looks no higher than the eye of an enemy on foot; the head must have a much greater degree of elevation to look up to the eye of an horseman, which is the part of your adversary which you always fix.

Some learned gentlemen, not satisfied that this statue should be thrown indiscriminately among Gladiators and Victors of the Olympic games, have given it a particular and lasting character; they roundly assert, that it is the identical statue, made by order of the Athenian State, in honour of their countryman Chabrias; and that it is precisely in the attitude which, according to Cornelius Nepos, that hero assumed, when he repulsed the army of Agesilaus. This idea is in the true spirit of an antiquary.

If, upon turning to that author, you remain unconvinced, and are interested in the honour of the statue, I can furnish you with no presumptive proof of its original dignity, except, that the character of the face is

noble and haughty, unlike that of a slave and mercenary Gladiator. And there is no rope around the neck, as the Gladiator Moriens has, whom that circumstance sufficiently indicates to have been in that unfortunate situation.

LETTER XLVI.

Rome.

A FEW days since I went to call on an artist of my acquaintance. I met, coming out of his door, an old woman, and a very handsome girl, remarkably well shaped. I rallied him a little on the subject of his visitors, and his good fortune in being attended in a morning by the prettiest girl I had seen since I came to Rome. "I think myself fortunate," said he, "in having found a girl so perfectly well made, who allows me to study her charms without restraint, and at a reasonable price; but I assure you, I can boast of no other kind of good fortune with her." "I am convinced," rejoined I, "that you take great pleasure in your studies, and there can be no doubt that you have made a very desirable progress." "Of that you shall be the judge," replied he, leading me into another room, where I saw a full length painting of the girl, in the character of Venus, and in the usual dress of that goddess. "There," said he, "is the only effect my studies have had hitherto, and I begin to suspect that they

“will never produce any thing more nearly
“connected with the original.” He then in-
formed me, that the old woman I had seen
was the girl’s mother, who never failed to ac-
company her daughter, when she came as a
model to him; that the father was a tradesman,
with a numerous family, who thought this the
most innocent use that his daughter’s beauty
could be put to, till she should get a husband;
and to prevent its being put to any other, his
wife always accompanied her. “I have drawn
“her as Venus,” added he; “but for any
“thing I know to the contrary, I should have
“approached nearer to her real character if I
“had painted her as Diana. She comes here
“merely in obedience to her parents, and
“gains her bread as innocently as if she were
“knitting purses in a convent from morn-
“ing to night, without seeing the face of a
“man.”

“However innocent all this may be,” said
I, “there is something at which the mind re-
“volts, in a mother’s being present when her
“daughter acts a part which, if not criminal,
“is, at least, highly indelicate.”

“To be sure,” replied the painter, “the
“woman has not quite so much delicacy as to
“starve, rather than let her daughter stand as a
“model; yet she seems to have attention to the
“girl’s chastity, too.”

“ Chastity !” answered I, “ why this would
 “ shock an *English* woman more than any
 “ thing which could be proposed to her. Every
 “ other kind of liberty must have been
 “ previously taken with her. She must be a
 “ complete prostitute in every sense of the
 “ word, before she could be brought to submit
 “ to appear in this manner.”

“ Your observation is true,” replied he ; but
 “ it does not prove that those who submit to
 “ this, to prevent their becoming prostitutes,
 “ do not judge better than those who become
 “ prostitutes, and then submit to this. In
 “ different countries,” continued he, “ people
 “ think very differently on subjects of this
 “ kind. The parents of this girl, to my know-
 “ ledge, have refused considerable offers from
 “ men of fortune, to be allowed the privilege
 “ of *visiting* her. They are so very careful of
 “ preventing every thing of that nature, that
 “ she actually lies in the same bed with them
 “ both, which is another piece of indelicacy
 “ not uncommon among the lower people in
 “ Italy. These parents have the more merit
 “ in refusing such offers, as their acting other-
 “ wise would by no means be thought extra-
 “ ordinary ; nor would it raise the same degree
 “ of indignation here as in some other coun-
 “ tries of Europe. Breach of chastity, in fe-
 “ males of low rank, is not considered here in
 “ the same heinous light that it is in some

“ parts of Germany and Great Britain ; where
“ it is deemed a crime of such magnitude, as
“ to require expiation, by a public rebuke
“ from the parson in the middle of the church.
“ I have heard of a clergyman in the North,
“ who had occasion to rebuke a young woman
“ for having borne a child before marriage.
“ The accomplice in her guilt had married her
“ immediately after her recovery ; but this did
“ not abate the parson’s indignation against the
“ wickedness they had previously committed.
“ Magdalen,” said he, with an awful tone of
voice, to the woman, “ you stand before this
“ congregation to be rebuked for the *barbarous*
“ and *unnatural* crime of fornication.”

“ The reverend clergyman,” said I, “ in all
“ probability intended to terrify his parishio-
“ ners from such irregularities ; and for this
“ purpose imagined there would be no harm
“ in putting them in the most odious point of
“ view.” “ This is attended, however, by
“ one dreadful consequence,” replied the ar-
tist, “ that these unhappy creatures, to con-
“ ceal a fault of which such a horrible idea is
“ given, and to prevent the shame of a pub-
“ lic exposition in the church, are sometimes
“ tempted to commit a crime which is in rea-
“ lity barbarous and unnatural in the highest
“ degree.”

“There is nothing,” continued he, “which
 “has a greater tendency to render any set of
 “people worthless, than the idea that they
 “are already considered as such. The wo-
 “men all over Great Britain, who live in an
 “open and avowed breach of chastity, are ge-
 “nerally more daringly wicked, and devoid of
 “principle, than the Italian women who take
 “the same liberties.”

“Would you then,” said I, “have women
 “of that kind more respected in Great Bri-
 “tain, in hopes that it might, in time, make
 “them more respectable?”

“I express no desire on the subject,” repli-
 ed he. “I was only going to remark, that,
 “in avoiding one inconveniency, mankind
 “often fall into another; and that we are
 “too apt to censure and ridicule customs and
 “opinions different from those which prevail
 “in our own country, without having suffi-
 “ciently considered all their immediate and
 “remote effects. I did not intend to decide,
 “whether the indulgence with which women
 “of a certain class are viewed in Italy, or
 “the ignominy with which they are treated
 “in Great Britain, has, upon the whole, the
 “best effect in society. But I have observed,
 “that the public courtezans in England often
 “become quite abandoned, and forget all sense
 “of gratitude or affection, even to their pa-

“rents. But in Italy, women who never put
“any value on the virtue of chastity, those
“who sell their favours for money, display
“a goodness of character in other respects,
“and continue their duty and attachment to
“their parents as long as they live. Fo-
“reigners who form a connection with a girl
“in this country, find themselves very often
“obliged to maintain the father, mother, and
“whole family to which she belongs. The
“lover generally considers this as a very trou-
“blesome circumstance, and endeavours to
“inspire his Italian mistress with that total
“neglect of her family which prevails among
“women of her stamp in other countries; but
“he very seldom succeeds. An Italian woman
“is unwilling to quit her native city and her
“family, even for a man she loves; and seldom
“does, till he makes some provision for her
“nearest relations.”

“You seem to have a very great affection
“for the Italian ladies; and, as far as I can
“perceive,” said I, “your passion is univer-
“sal to the whole class in question; but you
“have said nothing to the essential article of
“religion. It is to be hoped, that they do
“not allow the duties of their profession to
“make them neglect their souls.”

“I see,” replied the painter, “you are dis-
“posed to laugh at all I have said in their

"favour; but in answer to your question, I
 "will fairly own, that their religious, or, if
 "you please, we shall rather call them their
 "superstitious, sentiments, seem to be no way
 "influenced by their profession; nor are the
 "duties of their profession in any degree af-
 "fected by these sentiments. They attend
 "mass, and the ceremonies of devotion, with
 "as much punctuality as if their lives were
 "regular in all other respects; and they pass
 "their lives, in other respects, as if they had
 "never heard of any religious system but that
 "of Epicurus. In some countries of Eu-
 "rope, women of their stamp often despise
 "every appearance of decency, assume the dis-
 "gusting depravity of male debauchees, with
 "all the airs of affected infidelity, and real
 "profligacy; but *here* they always remember
 "they are women; and, after they have lost
 "the most valued and brightest ornament of
 "their sex, still endeavour to retain some of
 "the others."

"After all you have said in their favour,"
 said I, "their condition is certainly not to be
 "envied. If, therefore, you have any regard
 "for your *young Venus*, you will do well to
 "leave her under the care of her mother, and
 "never endeavour to introduce her into the
 "community whose eulogium you have been
 "making."

When I returned from the house of this artist, I found Mr. ——— waiting for me at our lodgings. He has of late paid his court very assiduously to a lady of high rank in this place: she is distinguished, even here, for a punctilious observance of all the ceremonies appointed by the church; and could not eat meat on a meagre-day, or deviate from the canonical regulations in any point of equal importance, without remorse; but in matters of gallantry, she has the reputation of being infinitely more liberal, both in her sentiments and practice. She has been for some time provided with a very able and respectable lover, of her own country. This did not make her blind to the good qualities of Mr. ———, with whom she formed a very intimate connection, soon after his arrival here; not that she prefers him to her other lover, but merely from a strong sense of the truth and beauty of this arithmetical axiom—one and one make two. The new arrangement with our countryman, however pleasing to the lady, gave offence to her Father Confessor. The scrupulous ecclesiastic was of opinion, that a connection of this nature with a heretic was more criminal than with a man of her own communion. Mr. ——— was just come from the lady to our lodgings; he had found her in worse humour than he had ever observed before, though her temper is not the mildest in the world. Mr. ——— entered as

the Confessor went out; she shut the door after him with a violence which shook the whole house, muttering, as she returned to her seat, *Che ti possino Cascar le braccia Vecchio Dondolone*, The devil go along with you for an old goose. Mr. ——— expressed his concern on seeing her so much agitated. “No wonder,” said she, “that stubborn Animalaccio who is just gone out, has had the insolence to refuse me absolution. As I expected you this morning, I sent for him betimes, that the matter might have been expedited before you should come; but here I have been above an hour endeavouring to persuade him, but all to no purpose; nothing I could say was able to mollify the obstinate old greasyascal.” Mr. ——— joined in abusing the Confessor’s perverseness, hinting, at the same time, that she ought to despise it as a matter of little importance; that she was sure of receiving absolution sooner or later; and, whenever it happened, all the transactions of the interval would be comprehended within that act of grace. Upon the strength of this reasoning, Mr. ——— was proceeding to fulfil the purpose of his visit with as much alacrity as if the most complete discharge had been granted for all proceedings—“*Pian Piano Idol mio*,” cried the lady, “*bisogna rimetterfi alla volontà di Dio*.” Softly, softly, my love. We must submit to the will of heaven. She then told her lover, that although she despised the

Confessor as much as he could do, yet she must take care of her own soul; that not having settled her accounts with Heaven for a considerable time, she was determined not to begin a new score till the old should be cleared; adding, for her principal reason, *Patto chiaro, amico caro*. Short accounts make long friends.

LETTER XLVII.

Rome.

I BEG you may not suspect me of affectation, or that I wish to assume the character of a connoisseur, when I tell you, that I have very great pleasure in contemplating the antique statues and busts, of which there are such numbers in this city. It is a natural curiosity, and I have had it all my life in a strong degree, to see celebrated men, those whose talents and great qualities can alone render the present age an interesting object to posterity, and prevent its being lost, like the dark ages which succeeded the destruction of the Roman empire, in the oblivious vortex of time, leaving scarcely a wreck behind. The durable monuments raised to fame by the inspiring genius of *Pitt*, and the invincible spirit of *Frederick*, will command the admiration of future ages, outlive the power of the empires which *they* aggrandized, and forbid the period in which *they* flourished, from ever passing away like the baseless fabric of a vision. The busts and statues of those memorable men will be viewed, by succeeding generations, with the

same regard and attention which we now bestow on those of Cicero and Cæsar. We expect to find something peculiarly noble and expressive in features which were animated, and which, we imagine, must have been in some degree modelled, by the sentiments of those to whom they belonged. It is not rank, it is character alone which interests posterity. We know that men may be seated on thrones, who would have been placed more suitably to their talents on the working-table of a taylor; we therefore give little attention to the busts or coins of the vulgar emperors. In the countenance of Claudius, we expect nothing more noble than the phlegmatic tranquillity of an acquiescing cuckold; in Caligula or Nero, the unrelenting frown of a negro-driver, or the insolent air of any unprincipled ruffian in power. Even in the high-praised Augustus we look for nothing essentially great, nothing superior to what we see in those minions of fortune, who are exalted, by a concurrence of incidents, to a situation in life to which their talents would never have raised them, and which their characters never deserved. In the face of Julius we expect to find the traces of deep reflection, magnanimity, and the anxiety natural to the man who had overturned the liberties of his native country, and who must have secretly dreaded the resentment of a spirited people; and in the face of Marcus Brutus we look for independence, conf-

cious integrity, and a mind capable of the highest effort of virtue.

It is natural to regret, that, of the number of antique statues which have come to us tolerably entire, so great a proportion are representations of gods and goddesses. Had they been intended for real persons, we might have had a perfect knowledge of the face and figure of the greatest part of the most distinguished citizens of ancient Greece and Rome. A man of unrelaxing wisdom would smile with contempt, and ask, if our having perfect representations of all the heroes, poets, and philosophers recorded in history, would make us either wiser or more learned? to which I answer, That there are a great many things, which neither can add to my small stock of learning nor wisdom, and yet give me more pleasure and satisfaction than those which do; and, unfortunately for mankind, the greatest part of them resemble me in this particular.

But though I would with pleasure have given up a great number of the Jupiters and Apollos and Venuses, whose statues we have, in exchange for an equal, or even a smaller, number of mere mortals whom I could name; I by no means consider the statues of those deities as uninteresting. Though they are imaginary beings, yet each of them has a distinct character of his own, of classical authority,

which has long been impressed on our memories ; and we assume the right of deciding on the artist's skill, and applauding or blaming, as he has succeeded or failed in expressing the established character of the god intended. From the ancient artists having exercised their genius in forming the images of an order of beings superior to mankind, another and a greater advantage is supposed to have followed ; it prompted the artists to attempt the uniting in one form, the various beauties and excellencies which nature had dispersed in many. This was not so easy a task as may by some be imagined ; for that which has a fine effect in one particular face or person, may appear a deformity when combined with a different complexion, different features, or a different shape. It therefore required great judgment and taste to collect those various graces, and combine them with elegance and truth ; and repeated efforts of this kind are imagined to have inspired some of the ancient sculptors with sublimer ideas of beauty than nature herself ever exhibited, as appears in some of their works which have reached our own times.

Though the works of no modern artist can stand a comparison with the great master-pieces now alluded to, yet nothing can be more absurd than the idea which some people entertain, that all antique statues are of more excellent workmanship than the modern. We see,

every day, numberless specimens of every species of sculpture, from the largest statues and bassos-relievos, to the smallest cameos and intaglios, that are undoubtedly antique, and yet far inferior, not only to the works of the best artists of Leo the Tenth's time, but also to those of many artists now alive in various parts of Europe. The passion for sculpture, which the Romans caught from the Greeks, became almost universal. Statues were not only the chief ornaments of their temples and palaces, but also of the houses of the middle, and even the lowest, order of citizens. They were prompted to adorn them with figures of a few favourite deities, by religion, as well as vanity: no man, but an atheist or a beggar, could be without them. This being the case, we may easily conceive what graceless divinities many of them must have been; for in this, no doubt, as in every other manufactory, there must occasionally have been bungling workmen employed, even in the most flourishing æra of the arts, and goods finished in a very careless and hurried manner, to answer the constant demand, and suit the dimensions of every purse. We must have a very high idea of the number of statues of one kind or other, which were in old Rome, when we consider, how many are still to be seen; how many have at different periods been carried away, by the curious, to every country in Europe; how many were mutilated and destroyed by the

gothic brutality of Barbarians, and the ill-directed zeal of the early Christians, who thought it a duty to exterminate every image, without distinction of age or sex, and without considering whether they were of God or man. This obliged the wretched heathens to hide the statues of their gods and of their ancestors in the bowels of the earth, where unquestionably great numbers of them still remain. Had they not been thus barbarously hewed to pieces, and buried, I had almost said, alive, we might have had several equal to the great master-pieces in the Vatican; for it is natural to imagine, that the rage of the zealots would be chiefly directed against those statues which were in the highest estimation with the heathens; and we must likewise imagine, that these would be the pieces which they, on their part, would endeavour, by every possible means, to preserve from their power, and bury in the earth. Of those which have been dug up, I shall mention only a very few, beginning with the Farnesian Hercules, which has been long admired as an exquisite model of masculine strength; yet, admirable as it is, it does not please all the world. I am told that the women in particular find something unsatisfactory, and even odious, in this figure; which, however majestic, is deficient in the charms most agreeable to them, and which might have been expected in the son of Jupiter and the beauteous Alcmena. A lady whom I

accompanied to the Farnese palace, turned away from it in disgust. I could not imagine what had shocked her. She told me, *after recollection*, that she could not bear the stern severity of his countenance, his large brawny limbs, and the club with which he was armed; which gave him more the appearance of one of those giants that, according to the old romances, carried away virgins and shut them up in gloomy castles, than the gallant Hercules, the lover of Omphale. Finally, the lady declared, she was convinced this statue could not be a just representation of Hercules; for it was not in the nature of things, that a man so formed could ever have been a reliever of distressed damsels.

Without such powerful support as that of the fair sex, I should not have exposed myself to the resentment of connoisseurs, by any expression which they might construe an attack upon this favourite statue; but, with their support, I will venture to assert, that the Farnese Hercules is faulty both in his form and attitude: the former is too unwieldy for active exertion, and the latter exhibits vigour *exhausted*. A resting attitude is surely not the most proper in which the all-conquering god of strength could be represented. Rest implies fatigue, and fatigue strength exhausted. A reposing Hercules is almost a contradiction. Invincible activity, and inexhaustible strength, are his characteristics. The ancient artist has

erred, not only in giving him an attitude which supposes his strength wants recruiting, but in the nature of the strength itself, the character of which should not be passive, but active.

Near to Hercules, under the arcades of the same Palazzo Farnese, is a most beautiful statue of Flora. The great advantage which ancient artists had in attending the exercises of the gymnasia, has been repeatedly urged as the reason of their superiority over the moderns in sculpture. We are told, that besides the usual exercises of the gymnasia, all those who proposed to contend at the Olympic games, were obliged, by the regulations, to prepare themselves, by exercising publicly for a year at Elis; and the statuary and painters constantly attended on the Arena, where they had opportunities of beholding the finest shaped, the most graceful, and most vigorous of the Grecian youth employed in those manly sports, in which the power of every muscle was exerted, and all their various actions called forth, and where the human form appeared in an infinite variety of different attitudes. By a constant attendance at such a school, independent of any other circumstance, the artists are supposed to have acquired a more animated, true, and graceful style, than possibly can be caught from viewing the same, mercenary models, which are exhibited in our academies. On the other hand, I

have heard it asserted, that the artist, who formed the Farnesian Flora, could not have improved his work, or derived any of its excellencies, from the circumstances above enumerated; because the figure is in a standing posture, and clothed. In the light, easy flow of drapery, and in the contour of the body being as distinctly discovered through it, as if the figure were naked, the chief merit of this statue is thought to consist. But this reasoning does not seem just; for the daily opportunities the ancient artists had of seeing naked figures, in every variety of action and attitude, must have given them advantages over the moderns, in forming even drapery figures. At Sparta, the women, upon particular occasions, danced naked. In their own families, they were seen every day clothed in light draperies; and so secondary was every consideration, even that of decency, to art, that the prettiest virgins of Agrigentum, it is recorded, were called upon by the legislature, without distinction, to shew themselves naked to a painter, to enable him to paint a Venus. Whilst the moderns, therefore, must acknowledge their inferiority to the ancients in the art of sculpture, they may be allowed merit, on account of the cause, to which it seems, in some measure at least, to be owing.

The finest specimens of antique sculpture are to be seen in the Vatican. In these the

Greek artists display an unquestionable superiority over the most successful efforts of the moderns. For me to attempt a description of these master-pieces, which have been described a thousand times, and imitated as often, without once having had justice done them, would be equally vain and superfluous. I confine myself to a very few observations. The most insensible of mankind must be struck with horror at sight of the Laocoon. On one of my visits to the Vatican, I was accompanied by two persons, who had never been there before: one of them is accused of being perfectly callous to every thing which does not immediately touch his own person; the other is a worthy, good man: the first, after staring for some time with marks of terror at the groupe, at length recovered himself; exclaiming with a laugh,—“Egad, I was afraid these d—d serpents would have left the fellows they are devouring, and made a snap at me; but I am happy to recollect they are of marble.” —“I thank you, Sir, most heartily,” said the other, “for putting me in mind of that circumstance; till you mentioned it, I was in agony for those two youths.”

Nothing can be conceived more admirably executed than this affecting groupe; in all probability, it never would have entered into my own head that it could have been in any respect improved. But when I first had the happiness

of becoming acquainted with Mr. Locke, a period of my life which I shall always recollect with peculiar pleasure, I remember my conversing with him upon this subject; and that Gentleman, after mentioning the execution of this piece, in the highest terms of praise, observed that, had the figure of Laocoon been *alone*, it would have been perfect. As a man suffering the most excruciating bodily pain with becoming fortitude, it admits of no improvement; his proportions, his form, his action, his expression, are exquisite. But when his sons appear, he is no longer an insulated, suffering individual, who, when he has met pain and death with dignity, has done all that could be expected from man; he commences *father*, and a much wider field is opened to the artist. We expect the deepest pathos in the exhibition of the sublimest character that art can offer to the contemplation of the human mind: A father forgetting pain, and instant death, to save his children. This Sublime and Pathetic the artist either did not see, or despaired of attaining. Laocoon's sufferings are merely corporal; he is deaf to the cries of his agonizing children, who are calling on him for assistance. But had he been throwing a look of anguish upon his sons, had he seemed to have forgotten his own sufferings in theirs, he would have commanded the sympathy of the spectator in a much higher degree. On the whole, Mr. Locke was of opinion,

that the execution of this groupe is perfect; but that the conception is not equal to the execution. I shall leave it to others to decide whether Mr. Locke, in these observations, spoke like a man of taste: I am sure he spoke like a father. I have sensibility to feel the beauty and justness of the remark, though I had not the ingenuity to make it.

It is disputed whether this groupe was formed from Virgil's description of the death of Laocoon and his sons, or the description made from the groupe; it is evident from their minute resemblance, that one or other must have been the case. The Poet mentions a circumstance, which could not be represented by the sculptor; he says that, although every other person around sought safety by flight, the father was attacked by the serpents, while he was advancing to the assistance of his sons—

——auxilio subeuntem ac tela ferentem.

The wretched father running to their aid,
With pious haste, but vain, they next invade.

DRYDEN.

This deficiency in the sculptor's art would have been finely supplied by the improvement which Mr. Locke proposed.

Reflecting on the dreadful condition of three persons entangled in the horrid twinings of serpents, and after contemplating the varied anguish so strongly expressed in their countenances, it is a relief to turn the eye to the heavenly figure of the Apollo. To form an adequate idea of the beauty of this statue, it is absolutely necessary to see it. With all the advantages of colour and life, the human form never appeared so beautiful; and we never can sufficiently admire the artist, who has endowed marble with a finer expression of grace, dignity, and understanding, than ever was seen in living features. In the forming of this inimitable figure, the artist seems to have wrought after an ideal form of beauty, superior to any in nature, and which existed only in his own imagination.

The admired statue of Antinous is in the same Court. Nothing can be more light, elegant, and easy; the proportions are exact, and the execution perfect. It is an exquisite representation of the most beautiful youth that ever lived.

The statue of Apollo represents something superior, and the emotions it excites are all of the sublime cast.

LETTER XLVIII.

Rome.

THE present Pope, who has assumed the name of Pius the Sixth, is a tall, well-made man, about sixty years of age, but retaining in his look all the freshness of a much earlier period of life. He lays a greater stress on the ceremonious part of religion than his predecessor Ganganelli, in whose reign a great relaxation of church-discipline is thought to have taken place. The late Pope was a man of moderation, good sense, and simplicity of manners; and could not go through all the ostentatious parade which his station required, without reluctance, and marks of disgust. He knew that the opinions of mankind had undergone a very great change since those ceremonies were established; and that some of the most respectable of the spectators considered as perfectly frivolous many things which formerly had been held as sacred. A man of good sense may seem to lay the greatest weight on ceremonies which he himself considers as ridiculous, provided he thinks the people, in whose sight he goes through them, are im-

pressed with a conviction of their importance; but if he knows that some of the beholders are entirely of a different way of thinking, he will be strongly tempted to evince, by some means or other, that he despises the fooleries he performs, as much as any of them. This, in all probability, was the case with Ganganelli; who, besides, was an enemy to fraud and hypocrisy of every kind. But, however remiss he may have been with regard to the etiquette of his spiritual functions, every body acknowledges his diligence and activity in promoting the temporal good of his subjects. He did all in his power to revive trade, and to encourage manufactures and industry of every kind. He built no churches, but he repaired the roads all over the ecclesiastical state; he restrained the malevolence of bigots, removed absurd prejudices, and promoted sentiments of charity and good-will to mankind in general, without excepting even heretics. His enemies, the Jesuits, with an intention to make him odious in the eyes of his own subjects, gave him the name of the Protestant Pope. If they supposed that this calumny would be credited, on account of the conduct above mentioned, they at once paid the highest compliment to the Pope and the Protestant religion. The careless manner in which Ganganelli performed certain functions, and the general tenour of his life and sentiments, were lamented by politicians, as well as by bigots. However fri-

volous the former might think many ceremonies in themselves, they still considered them as of political importance, in such a government as that of Rome; and the Conclave held on the death of the late Pope, are thought to have been in some degree influenced by such considerations in chusing his successor. The present Pope, before he was raised to that dignity, was considered as a firm believer in all the tenets of the Roman Church, and a strict and scrupulous observer of all its injunctions and ceremonials. As his pretensions, in point of family, fortune, and connexions, were smaller than those of most of his brother cardinals, it is the more probable that he owed his elevation to this part of his character, which rendered him a proper person to check the progress of abuses that had been entirely neglected by the late Pope; under whose administration free-thinking was said to have been countenanced, Protestantism in general regarded with diminished abhorrence, and the Calvinists in particular treated with a degree of indulgence, to which their inveterate enmity to the church of Rome gave them no title. Several instances of this are enumerated, and one in particular, which, I dare say, you will think a stronger proof of the late Pope's good sense and good humour, than that of negligence to which his enemies imputed it.

A Scotch presbyterian having heated his brain, by reading the Book of Martyrs, the cruelties of the Spanish Inquisition, and the Histories of all the persecutions that ever were raised by the Roman Catholics against the Protestants, was seized with a dread, that the same horrors were just about to be renewed. This terrible idea disturbed his imagination day and night; he thought of nothing but racks and scaffolds; and, on one occasion, he dreamt that there was a continued train of bonfires, with a tar-barrel and a Protestant in each, all the way from Smithfield to St. Andrew's.

He communicated the anxiety and distress of his mind to a worthy sensible clergyman who lived in the neighbourhood. This gentleman took great pains to quiet his fears, proving to him, by strong and obvious arguments, that there was little or no danger of such an event as he dreaded. These reasonings had a powerful effect while they were delivering, but the impression did not last, and was always effaced by a few pages of the Book of Martyrs. As soon as the clergyman remarked this, he advised the relations to remove that, and every book which treated of persecution or martyrdom, entirely out of the poor man's reach. This was done accordingly, and books of a less gloomy complexion were substituted in their place; but as all of them formed a strong

contrast with the colour of his mind, he could not bear their perusal, but betook himself to the study of the Bible, which was the only book of his ancient library which had been left; and so strong a hold had his former studies taken of his imagination, that he could relish no part of the Bible, except the Revelation of St. John, a great part of which, he thought, referred to the whore of Babylon, or in other words, the Pope of Rome. This part of the scripture he perused continually with unabating ardor and delight. His friend the clergyman, having observed this, took occasion to say, that every part of the Holy Bible was, without doubt, most sublime, and wonderfully instructive; yet he was surprised to see that he limited his studies entirely to the last book, and neglected all the rest. To which the other replied, That *he* who was a divine, and a man of learning, might, with propriety, read all the sacred volume from beginning to end; but, for his own part, he thought proper to confine himself to what he could understand; and *therefore*, though he had a due respect for all the scripture, he acknowledged he gave a preference to the Revelation of St. John. This answer entirely satisfied the clergyman; he did not think it expedient to question him any farther; he took his leave, after having requested the people of the family with whom this person lived, to have a watchful eye on their relation.

In the mean time, this poor man's terrors, with regard to the revival of popery and persecution, daily augmented; and nature, in all probability, would have sunk under the weight of such accumulated anxiety, had not a thought occurred which relieved his mind in an instant, by suggesting an infallible method of preventing all the evils which his imagination had been brooding over for so long a time. The happy idea which afforded him so much comfort, was no other, than that he should immediately go to Rome, and convert the Pope from the Roman Catholic to the Presbyterian religion. The moment he hit on this fortunate expedient, he felt at once the strongest impulse to undertake the task, and the fullest conviction that his undertaking would be crowned with success; it is no wonder, therefore, that his countenance threw off its former gloom, and that all his features brightened with the heart-felt thrillings of happiness and self-applause. While his relations congratulated each other on this agreeable change, the exulting visionary, without communicating his design to any mortal, set out for London, took his passage to Leghorn, and, in a short time after, arrived in perfect health of body, and in exalted spirits, at Rome.

He directly applied to an ecclesiastic of his own country, of whose obliging temper he had previously heard, and whom he considered as a

proper person to procure him an interview necessary for the accomplishment of his project. He informed that gentleman, that he earnestly wished to have a conference with the Pope, on a business of infinite importance, and which admitted of no delay. It was not difficult to perceive the state of this poor man's mind; the good natured ecclesiastic endeavoured to sooth and amuse him, putting off the conference till a distant day; in hopes that means might be fallen on, during the interval, to prevail on him to return to his own country. A few days after this, however, he happened to go to St. Peter's church, at the very time when his Holiness was performing some religious ceremony. At this sight our impatient missionary felt all his passions inflamed with irresistible ardour; he could no longer wait for the expected conference, but bursting out with zealous indignation, he exclaimed, "O thou beast of nature, with seven heads and ten horns! thou mother of harlots, arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls! throw away the golden cup of abominations, and the filthiness of thy fornication!"

You may easily imagine the astonishment and hubbub that such an apostrophe, from such a person, in such a place, would occasion; he was immediately carried to prison by the Swiss halberdiers.

When it was known that he was a British subject, some who understood English were ordered to attend his examination. The first question asked of him was, "What had brought him to Rome?" He answered, "To anoint the eyes of the scarlet whore with eye-salve, that she might see her wickedness." They asked, "Who he meant by the scarlet whore?" He answered, "Who else could he mean, but her who sitteth upon seven mountains, who hath seduced the kings of the earth to commit fornication, and who hath gotten drunk with the blood of the saints, and the blood of the martyrs?" Many other questions were asked, and such provoking answers returned, that some suspected the man affected madness, that he might give vent to his rancour and petulance with impunity; and they were for condemning him to the gallies, that he might be taught more sense, and better manners. But when they communicated their sentiments to Clement the Fourteenth, he said, with great good humour, "That he never had heard of any body whose understanding, or politeness, had been much improved at that school; that although the poor man's first address had been a little rough and abrupt, yet he could not help considering himself as obliged to him for his good intentions, and for his undertaking such a long journey with a view to do good." He afterwards gave orders to treat the man with gentleness while he remain-

ed in confinement, and to put him on board the first ship bound from Civita Vecchia to England, defraying the expence of his passage. However humane and reasonable this conduct may be thought by many, there were people who condemned it as an injudicious piece of lenity, which might have a tendency to sink the dignity of the sacred office, and expose it to future insults. If such behaviour as this did not pass without blame, it may be easily supposed, that few of the late Pope's actions escaped uncensured; and many who loved the easy amiable dispositions of the man, were of opinion, that the spirit of the times required a different character on the Papal throne. This idea prevailed among the Cardinals at the late election, and the Conclave is supposed to have fixed on Cardinal Braschi to be Pope, from the same motive that the Roman senate sometimes chose a Dictator to restore and enforce the ancient discipline.

L E T T E R XLIX.

Rome.

PIUS the Sixth performs all the religious functions of his office in the most solemn manner; not only on public and extraordinary occasions, but also in the most common acts of devotion. I happened lately to be at St. Peter's church, when there was scarcely any other body there; while I lounged from chapel to chapel, looking at the sculpture and paintings, the Pope entered with a very few attendants; when he came to the statue of St. Peter, he was not satisfied with bowing, which is the usual mark of respect shewn to that image; or with kneeling, which is performed by more zealous persons; or with kissing the foot, which I formerly imagined concluded the climax of devotion; he bowed, he knelt, he kissed the foot, and then he rubbed his brow and his whole head with every mark of humility, fervour, and adoration, upon the sacred stump.—It is no more, one half of the foot having been long since worn away by the lips of the pious; and if the example of his Holiness is universally imitated,

nothing but a miracle can prevent the leg, thigh, and other parts from meeting with the same fate. This uncommon appearance of zeal in the Pope, is not imputed to hypocrisy or to policy, but is supposed to proceed entirely from a conviction of the efficacy of those holy frictions; an opinion which has given people a much higher idea of the strength of his faith, than of his understanding. This being jubilee year, he may possibly think a greater appearance of devotion necessary now, than at any other time. The first jubilee was instituted by Boniface the Eighth, in the year 1300. Many ceremonies and institutions of the Roman Catholic church are founded on those of the old Heathens. This is evidently an imitation of the Roman secular games, which were exhibited every hundredth year in honour of the gods*; they lasted three days and three nights; they were attended with great pomp, and drew vast numbers of people to Rome, from all parts of Italy, and the most distant provinces. Boniface, recollecting this, determined to institute something analogous, which would immortalize his own name, and promote the interest of the Roman Catholic religion in general, and that of the city of Rome in particular. He embraced the favour-

* The Carmen Seculare of Horace was composed on occasion of those celebrated by Augustus in the year of Rome 736.

able opportunity which the beginning of a century presented ; he invented a few extraordinary ceremonies, and declared the year 1300 the first jubilee year, during which he assured mankind, that Heaven would be in a particular manner propitious, in granting indulgences, and remission of sins, to all who should come to Rome, and attend the functions there to be performed, at this fortunate period, which was not to occur again for a hundred years. This drew a great concourse of wealthy sinners to Rome ; and the extraordinary circulation of money it occasioned, was strongly felt all over the Pope's dominions. Clement the Sixth, regretting that these advantages should occur so seldom, abridged the period, and declared there would be a jubilee every fifty years ; the second was accordingly celebrated in the year 1350. Sixtus the Fifth, imagining that the interval was still too long, once more retrenched the half ; and ever since there has been a jubilee every twenty-fifth year *. It is not likely that any future Pope will think of shortening this period ; if any alteration were again to take place, it most probably would be, to restore the ancient period of fifty or a hundred years ; for, instead of the wealthy pilgrims who flocked to Rome from every

* To this last abridgment I am indebted for having seen the ceremonies and processions on the termination of this sacred year.

quarter of Christendom, ninety-nine in a hundred of those who come now, are supported by alms during their journey, or are barely able to defray their own expences by the strictest œconomy ; and his Holiness is supposed at present to derive no other advantage from the uncommon fatigue he is obliged to go through on the jubilee year, except the satisfaction he feels, in reflecting on the benefit his labours confer on the souls of the beggars, and other travellers, who resort from all corners of Italy to Rome, on this blessed occasion. The States which border on the Pope's dominions, suffer many temporal inconveniencies from the zeal of the peasants and manufacturers, the greater part of whom still make a point of visiting St. Peter's on the jubilee year ; the loss sustained by the countries which such emigrants abandon, is not balanced by any advantage transferred to that to which they resort ; the good arising on the whole, being entirely of a spiritual nature. By far the greater number of pilgrims come from the kingdom of Naples, whose inhabitants are said to be of a very devout and very amorous disposition. The first prompts them to go to Rome in search of that absolution which the second renders necessary ; and on the year of jubilee, when indulgences are to be had at an easier rate than at any other time, those who can afford it generally carry away such a stock, as not only is sufficient to

clear old scores, but will also serve as an indemnifying fund for future transgressions.

There is one door into the church of St. Peter's, which is called the Holy Door. This is always walled up, except on this distinguished year; and even then no person is permitted to enter by it, but in the humblest posture. The pilgrims, and many others, prefer crawling into the church upon their knees, by this door, to walking in, the usual way, by any other. I was present at the shutting up of this Holy Door. The Pope being seated on a raised seat, or kind of throne, surrounded by Cardinals and other ecclesiastics, an anthem was sung, accompanied by all sorts of musical instruments. During the performance, his Holiness descended from the throne, with a golden trowel in his hand, placed the first brick, and applied some mortar; he then returned to his seat, and the door was instantly built up by more expert, though less hallowed, workmen; and will remain as it is now, till the beginning of the nineteenth century, when it will be again opened, by the Pope then in being, with the same solemnity that it has been now shut. Though his Holiness places but a single brick, yet it is very remarkable that this never fails to communicate its influence, in such a rapid and powerful manner, that, within about an hour, or at most an hour and a half, all the other bricks, which

form the wall of the Holy Door, acquire an equal degree of sanctity with that placed by the Pope's own hands. The common people and pilgrims are well acquainted with this wonderful effect. At the beginning of this Jubilee-year, when the late wall was thrown down, men, women, and children scrambled and fought for the fragments of the bricks and mortar, with the same eagerness which less enlightened mobs display, on days of public rejoicing, when handfuls of money are thrown among them. I have been often assured that those pieces of brick, besides their sanctity, have also the virtue of curing many of the most obstinate diseases : and, if newspapers were permitted at Rome, there is not the least reason to doubt, that those cures would be attested publicly by the patients, in a manner as satisfactory and convincing as are the cures performed daily by the pills, powders, drops, and balsams advertised in the London newspapers. After the shutting of the Holy Door, mass was celebrated at midnight ; and the ceremony was attended by vast multitudes of people. For my own part, I suspended my curiosity till next day, which was Christmas-day, when I returned again to St. Peter's church, and saw the Pope perform mass on that solemn occasion. His Holiness went through all the evolutions of the ceremony with an address and flexibility of body, which are rarely to be found in those who wear the tiara ; who are, generally speak-

ing, men bowing under the load of years and infirmities. His present Holiness has hitherto suffered from neither. His features are regular, and he has a fine countenance; his person is straight, and his movements are graceful. His leg and foot are remarkably well made, and always ornamented with silk stockings, and red slippers, of the most delicate construction. Notwithstanding that the papal uniforms are by no means calculated to set off the person to the greatest advantage, yet the peculiar neatness with which they are put on, and the nice adjustment of their most minute parts, sufficiently prove that his present Holiness is not insensible of the charms of his person, or unsolicitous about his external ornaments. Though verging towards the winter of life, his cheeks still glow with autumnal roses, which, at a little distance, appear as blooming as those of the spring. If he himself were less clear-sighted than he seems to be, to the beauties of his face and person, he could not also be deaf to the voices of the women, who break out into exclamations, in praise of both, as often as he appears in public. On a public occasion, lately, as he was carried through a particular street, a young woman at a window exclaimed, "Quanto e bello! O quanto e bello!" How beautiful he is! O how beautiful he is! and was immediately answered by a zealous old lady at the window opposite, who, folding her hands in each other, and raising

her eyes to heaven, cried out, with a mixture of love for his person, and veneration for his sacred office, "Tanto e bello, quanto e santo!" He is as beautiful as he is holy. When we know that such a quantity of incense is daily burnt under his sacred nostrils, we ought not to be astonished, though we should find his brain, on some occasions, a little intoxicated.

Vanity is a very comfortable failing; and has such an universal power over mankind, that not only the gay blossoms of youth, but even the shrivelled bosom of age, and the contracted heart of bigotry, open, expand, and display strong marks of sensibility under its influence.

After mass, the Pope gave the benediction to the people assembled in the Grand Court, before the church of St. Peter's. It was a remarkably fine day; an immense multitude filled that spacious and magnificent area; the horse and foot guards were drawn up in their most showy uniform. The Pope, seated in an open, portable chair, in all the splendour which his wardrobe could give, with the tiara on his head, was carried out of a large window, which opens on a balcony in the front of St. Peter's. The silk hangings and gold trappings with which the chair was embellished, concealed the men who carried it;

so that to those who viewed him from the area below, his Holiness seemed to sail forward, from the window self-balanced in the air, like a celestial being. The instant he appeared, the music struck up, the bells rung from every church, and the cannon thundered from the castle of St. Angelo in repeated peals. During the intervals, the church of St. Peter's, the palace of the Vatican, and the banks of the Tiber, re-echoed the acclamations of the populace. At length his Holiness arose from his seat, and an immediate and awful silence ensued. The multitude fell upon their knees, with their hands and eyes raised towards his Holiness, as to a benign Deity. After a solemn pause, he pronounced the benediction, with great fervour; elevating his outstretched arms as high as he could; then closing them together, and bringing them back to his breast with a slow motion, as if he had got hold of the blessing, and was drawing it gently from heaven. Finally, he threw his arms open, waving them for some time, as if his intention had been to scatter the benediction with impartiality among the people.

No ceremony can be better calculated for striking the senses, and imposing on the understanding, than this of the Supreme Pontiff giving the blessing from the balcony of St. Peter's. For my own part, if I had not, in my early youth, received impres-

frons highly unfavourable to the chief actor in this magnificent interlude, I should have been in danger of paying him a degree of respect, very inconsistent with the religion in which I was educated.

LETTER L.

Rome.

IN my last, I informed you of my having been seduced almost into idolatry, by the influence of example, and the pomp which surrounded the idol. I must now confess that I have actually bowed the knee to Baal, from mere wantonness. We are told that, to draw near to that Being, who ought to be the only object of worship, with our lips, while our hearts are far from him, is a mockery. Such daring and absurd hypocrisy I shall always avoid: but to have drawn near to *him*, who ought not to be an object of worship, with the lips only, while the heart continued at a distance, I hope will be considered as no more than a venial transgression. In short, I trust, that it will not be looked on as a mortal sin in Protestants to have kissed the Pope's toe. If it should, some of your friends are in a deplorable way, as you shall hear.—It is usual for strangers to be presented to his Holiness, before they leave Rome. The D— of H—, Mr. R—, and myself, have all been at the Vatican together, upon that important business. Your young acquaint-

ance Jack, who, having now got a commission in the army, considers himself no longer as a boy, desired to accompany us. We went under the auspices of a certain ecclesiastic, who usually attends the English on such occasions.

He very naturally concluded, that it would be most agreeable to us to have the circumstance of kissing the slipper dispensed with. Having had some conversation, therefore, with his Holiness, in his own apartment, while we remained in another room, previous to our introduction; he afterwards returned, and informed us, that the Pontiff, indulgent to the prejudices of the British nation, did not insist on that part of the ceremonial; and therefore a very low bow, on our being presented, was all that would be required of us.

A bow! cried the D— of H—; I should not have given myself any trouble about the matter, had I suspected that all was to end in a bow. I look on kissing the toe as the only amusing circumstance of the whole; if that is to be omitted, I will not be introduced at all. For if the most ludicrous part is left out, who would wait for the rest of a farce?

This was a thunderstroke to our negociator, who expected thanks, at least, for the honourable terms he had obtained; but who, on the contrary, found himself in the same disagreea-

ble predicament with other negociators, who have met with abuse and reproach from their countrymen, on account of treaties for which they expected universal applause.

The D— of H— knew nothing of the treaty which our introducer had just concluded ; otherwise he would certainly have prevented the negociation. As I perceived, however, that our ambassador was mortified with the thoughts that all his labour should prove abortive, I said, that, although he had prevailed with his Holiness to wave that part of the ceremonial, which his Grace thought so entertaining, yet it would unquestionably be still more agreeable to him that the whole should be performed to its utmost extent : this new arrangement, therefore, needed not be an obstruction to our being presented.

The countenance of our Conductor brightened up at this proposal. He immediately ushered us into the presence of the Supreme Pontiff. We all bowed to the ground ; the supplest of the company had the happiness to touch the sacred slipper with their lips, and the least agile were within a few inches of that honour. As this was more than had been bargained for, his Holiness seemed agreeably surprised ; raised the D— with a smiling countenance, and conversed with him in an obliging manner, asking the common questions, How

long he had been in Italy? Whether he found Rome agreeable? When he intended to set out for Naples?—He said something of the same kind to each of the company; and, after about a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes, we took our leave.

Next day, his Holiness sent his compliments to the D—, with a present of two medals, one of gold, and the other of silver; on both of which the head of the Pontiff is very accurately engraved.

The manner in which the generality of sovereign princes pass their time, is as far from being amusing or agreeable, as one can possibly imagine. Slaves to the tiresome routine of etiquette; martyrs to the oppressive fatigue of pomp; constrained to walk every levee-day around the same dull circle, to gratify the vanity of fifty or a hundred people, by whispering a something or a nothing into the ears of each; obliged to wear a smiling countenance, even when the heart is oppressed with sadness; besieged by the craving faces of those, who are more displeased at what is withheld, than grateful for the favours they have received; surrounded, as he constantly is, by adepts in the art of simulation, all professing the highest possible regard; how shall the puzzled monarch distinguish real from assumed attachment? and what a risk does he run, of placing his confi-

dence where he ought to have directed his indignation ! And, to all these inconveniencies, when we add this, that he is precluded from those delightful sensations which spring from disinterested friendship, sweet equality, and the gay, careless enjoyments of social life, we must acknowledge, that all that is brilliant in the condition of a sovereign, is not sufficient to compensate for such restraints, such dangers, and such deprivations.

So far indeed are we from considering that envied condition as enviable, that great part of mankind are more apt to think it insupportable ; and are surprised to find, that those unhappy men, whom fate has condemned to suffer the pains of royalty for life, are able to wait with patience for the natural period of their days. For, strange as it may appear, history does not furnish us with an instance, not even in Great Britain itself, of a king, who hanged, or drowned, or put himself to death in any other violent manner, from mere tædium, as other mortals, disgusted with life, are apt to do. I was at a loss to account for such an extraordinary fact, till I recollected that, however void of resources and activity the minds of monarchs may be, they are seldom allowed to rest in repose. The storms to which people in their lofty situation are exposed, occasion such agitations as prevent the stagnating slime of tædium from gathering on their minds. That

kings do not commit suicide, therefore, affords only a very slender presumption of the happiness of their condition: although it is a strong proof, that all the hurricanes of life are not so insupportable to the human mind, as that insipid, fearless, hopeless calm, which envelopes men who are devoid of mental enjoyments, and whose senses are palled with satiety. If there is any truth in the above representation of the regal condition, would not you imagine that of all others it would be the most shunned? Would not you imagine that every human being would shrink from it, as from certain misery; and that at least every wise man would say, with the Poet,

I envy none their pageantry and show,
I envy none the gilding of their woe?

Not only every wise man, but every foolish man, will adopt the sentiment, and act accordingly; provided his rank in life removes him from the possibility of ever attaining the objects in question. For what is situated beyond the sphere of our hopes, very seldom excites our desires; but bring the powerful magnets a little nearer, and they attract the human passions with a force which reason and philosophy cannot controul. Placed within their reach, the wise and the foolish grasp with equal eagerness at crowns and sceptres, in spite of all the thorns with which they are surrounded. Their allur-

ing magic seems to have the power of changing the very characters and natures of men. In pursuit of them, the indolent have been excited to the most active exertions, the voluptuous have renounced their darling pleasures; and even those who have long walked in the direct road of integrity, have deviated into all the crooked paths of villany and fraud.

There are passions, whose indulgence is so exceedingly flattering to the natural vanity of men, that they will gratify them, though persuaded that the gratification will be attended by disappointment and misery. The love of power and sovereignty is of this class. It has been a general belief, ever since the kingly office was established among men, that cares and anxiety were the constant attendants of royalty. Yet this general conviction never made a single person decline an opportunity of embarking on this sea of troubles. Every new adventurer flatters himself that he shall be guided by some happy star undiscovered by former navigators; and those who, after trial, have relinquished the voyage—Charles, Christina, Amadeus, and others—when they had quitted the helm, and were safely arrived in port, are said to have languished, all the rest of their lives, for that situation which their own experience taught them was fraught with misery.

Henry the Fourth of England did not arrive at the throne by the natural and direct road. Shakespear puts the following Address to Sleep, into the mouth of this monarch:

——— O Sleep! O gentle Sleep!
 Nature's soft nurse, how have I frighted thee,
 That thou no more wilt weigh my eyelids down,
 And steep my senses in forgetfulness?
 Why rather, Sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,
 Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,
 And hush'd with busy night-flies to thy slumber;
 Than in the perfum'd chambers of the Great,
 Under the canopies of costly state,
 And lull'd with sounds of sweetest melody?
 O thou dull God! why ly'st thou with the vile
 In loathsome beds; and leav'st the kingly couch?
 A watch-case, or a common 'larum bell?
 Wilt thou, upon the high and giddy mast,
 Seal up the ship-boy's eyes, and rock his brains
 In cradle of the rude imperious surge;
 And in the visitation of the winds,——
 Who take the ruffian billows by the top,
 Curling their monstrous heads, and hanging them
 With deaf'ning clamours in the slipp'ry shrouds,——
 Canst thou, O partial Sleep! give thy repose
 To the wet sea-boy in an hour so rude;
 And, in the calmest and most stillest night,
 With all appliances and means to boot,
 Deny it to a King? ——

However eager and impatient this Prince may have formerly been to obtain the crown, you would conclude that he was quite cloyed

by possession at the time he made this speech ; and therefore, at first sight, you would not expect that he should afterwards display any excessive attachment to what gives him so much uneasiness. But Shakespear, who knew the secret wishes, perverse desires, and strange inconsistencies of the human heart, better than man ever knew them, makes this very Henry so tenaciously fond of that which he himself considered as the cause of all his inquietude, that he cannot bear to have the crown one moment out of his sight, but orders it to be placed on his pillow when he lies on his death-bed.

Of all diadems, the Tiara, in my opinion, has the fewest charms ; and nothing can afford a stronger proof of the strength and perseverance of man's passion for sovereign power, than our knowledge, that even this ecclesiastical crown is sought after with as much eagerness, perhaps with more, than any other crown in the world, although the candidates are generally in the decline of life, and all of a profession which avows the most perfect contempt of worldly grandeur. This appears the more wonderful when we reflect, that, over and above those sources of weariness and vexation, which the Pope has in common with other sovereigns, he has some which are peculiar to himself.—The tiresome religious functions which he must perform, the ungenial solitude of his meals, the exclusion of the company and conversation of

women, restriction from the tenderest and most delightful connexions in life, from the endearments of a parent, and the *open acknowledgment* of his own children; his mind oppressed with the gloomy reflection, that the man for whom he has the least regard, perhaps his greatest enemy, may be his immediate successor; to which is added, the pain of seeing his influence, both spiritual and temporal, declining every day; and the mortification of knowing, that all his ancient lofty pretensions are laughed at by one half of the Roman Catholics, all the Protestants, and totally disregarded by the rest mankind. I know of nothing which can be put in the other scale to balance all those peculiar disadvantages which his Holiness labours under, unless it is the singular felicity which he lawfully may, and no doubt does enjoy, in the contemplation of his own infallibility.

L E T T E R LI.

Rome.

IN their external deportment, the Italians have a grave solemnity of manner, which is sometimes thought to arise from a natural gloominess of disposition. The French, above all other nations, are apt to impute to melancholy, the sedate serious air which accompanies reflection.

Though in the pulpit, on the theatre, and even in common conversation, the Italians make use of a great deal of action; yet Italian vivacity is different from French; the former proceeds from sensibility, the latter from animal spirits.

The inhabitants of this country have not the brisk look, and elastic trip, which is universal in France; they move rather with a slow composed pace: their spines never having been forced into a straight line, retain the natural bend; and the people of the most finished fashion, as well as the neglected vulgar, seem to prefer the unconstrained attitude of the An-

tinuous, and other antique statues, to the artificial graces of a French dancing-master, or the erect strut of a German soldier. I imagine I perceive a great resemblance between many of the living countenances I see daily, and the features of the ancient busts and statues ; which leads me to believe, that there are a greater number of the genuine descendants of the old Romans in Italy, than is generally imagined.

I am often struck with the fine character of countenance to be seen in the streets of Rome. I never saw features more expressive of reflection, sense, and genius ; in the very lowest ranks there are countenances which announce minds fit for the highest and most important situations ; and we cannot help regretting, that those to whom they belong, have not received an education adequate to the natural abilities we are convinced they possess, and placed where these abilities could be brought into action.

Of all the countries in Europe, Switzerland is that in which the beauties of nature appear in the greatest variety of forms, and on the most magnificent scale ; in that country, therefore, the young landscape painter has the best chance of seizing the most sublime ideas : but Italy is the best school for the history painter, not only on account of its being enriched with the works of the greatest master,

and the noblest models of antique sculpture ; but also on account of the fine expressive style of the Italian countenance. Here you have few or none of those fair, fat, glistening, unmeaning faces, so common in the more northern parts of Europe. I happened once to sit by a foreigner of my acquaintance at the Opera in the Hay-market, when a certain Nobleman, who at that time was a good deal talked of, entered. I whispered him—"That is Lord ——" "Not surely the famous Lord ——" said he. "Yes," said I, "the very same." "It must be acknowledged then," continued he, "that the noble Earl does infinite honour to those who have had the care of his education." "How so?" rejoined I. "Because," replied the foreigner, "a countenance so completely vacant, strongly indicates a deficiency of natural abilities ; the respectable figure he makes in the senate, I therefore presume must be entirely owing to instruction."

Strangers, on their arrival at Rome, form no high idea of the beauty of the Roman women, from the specimens they see in the fashionable circles to which they are first introduced. There are some exceptions ; but in general it must be acknowledged, that the present race of women of high rank, are more distinguished by their other ornaments, than by their beauty. Among the citizens, how-

ever, and in the lower classes, you frequently meet with the most beautiful countenances. For a brilliant red and white, and all the charms of complexion, no women are equal to the English. If a hundred, or any greater number, of English women were taken at random, and compared with the same number of the wives and daughters of the citizens of Rome, I am convinced, that ninety of the English would be found handsomer than ninety of the Romans; but the probability is, that two or three in the hundred Italians, would have finer countenances than any of the English. English beauty is more remarkable in the country, than in towns; the peasantry of no country in Europe can stand a comparison, in point of looks, with those of England. That race of people have the conveniencies of life in no other country in such perfection; they are no where so well fed, so well defended from the injuries of the seasons; and no where else do they keep themselves so perfectly clean, and free from all the vilifying effects of dirt. The English country girls, taken collectively, are, unquestionably, the handsomest in the world. The female peasants of most other countries, indeed, are so hard-worked, so ill fed, so much tanned by the sun, and so dirty, that it is difficult to know whether they have any beauty or not. Yet I have been informed, by some Amateurs, since I came here, that, in spite of all these disadvantages, they sometimes find, among the

Italian peasantry, countenances highly interesting, and which they prefer to all the cherry cheeks of Lancashire.

Beauty, doubtless, is infinitely varied; and happily for mankind, their tastes and opinions, on the subject, are equally various. Notwithstanding this variety, however, a style of face, in some measure peculiar to its own inhabitants, has been found to prevail in each different nation of Europe. This peculiar countenance is again greatly varied, and marked with every degree of discrimination between the extremes of beauty and ugliness. I will give you a sketch of the general style of the most beautiful female heads in this country, from which you may judge whether they are to your taste or not.

A great profusion of dark hair, which seems to encroach upon the forehead, rendering it short and narrow; the nose generally either aquiline, or continued in a straight line from the lower part of the brow; a full and short upper lip; by the way, nothing has a worse effect on a countenance, than a large interval between the nose and mouth; the eyes are large, and of a sparkling black. The black eye certainly labours under one disadvantage, which is, that, from the iris and pupil being of the same colour, the contraction and dilatation of the latter is not seen, by which the

eye is abridged of half its powers. Yet the Italian eye is wonderfully expressive; some people think it says too much. The complexion, for the most part, is of a clear brown, sometimes fair, but very seldom florid, or of that bright fairness which is common in England and Saxony. It must be owned, that those features which have a fine expression of sentiment and meaning in youth, are more apt, than less expressive faces, to become soon strong and masculine. In England and Germany, the women, a little advanced in life, retain the appearance of youth longer than in Italy.

With countenances so favourable for the pencil, you will naturally imagine, that portrait painting is in the highest perfection here. The reverse, however, of this is true; that branch of the art is in the lowest estimation all over Italy. In palaces, the best furnished with pictures, you seldom see a portrait of the proprietor, or any of his family. A quarter length of the reigning Pope is sometimes the only portrait, of a living person, to be seen in the whole palace. Several of the Roman Princes affect to have a room of state, or audience chamber, in which is a raised seat like a throne, with a canopy over it. In those rooms the effigies of the Pontiffs are hung; they are the work of very inferior artists, and seldom cost above three or four sequins. As

soon as his Holiness departs this life, the portrait disappears, and the face of his successor is in due time hung up in its stead. This, you will say, is treating their old sovereign a little unkindly, and paying no very expensive compliment to the new; it is not so economical, however, as what was practised by a certain person. I shall not inform you whether he was a Frenchman or an Englishman, but he certainly was a courtier, and professed the highest possible regard for all living monarchs; but considered them as no better than any other piece of clay when dead. He had a full length picture of his own Sovereign in the principal room of his house; on his majesty's death, to save himself the expence of a fresh body, and a new suit of ermine, he employed a painter to brush out the face and periwig, and clap the new King's head on his grandfather's shoulders; which, he declared, were in the most perfect preservation, and fully able to wear out three or four such heads as painters usually give in these degenerate days.

The Italians, in general, very seldom take the trouble of sitting for their pictures. They consider a portrait as a piece of painting, which engages the admiration of nobody but the person it represents, or the painter who drew it. Those who are in circumstances to pay the best artists, generally employ them in

some subject more universally interesting, than the representation of human countenances staring out of a piece of canvas.

Pompeio Battoni is the best Italian painter now at Rome. His taste and genius led him to history painting, and his reputation was originally acquired in that line; but by far the greater part of his fortune, whatever that may be, has flowed through a different channel. His chief employment, for many years past, has been painting the portraits of the young English, and other strangers of fortune, who visit Rome. There are artists in England, superior in this, and every other branch of painting, to Battoni. They, like him, are seduced from the free walks of genius, and chained, by interest, to the servile drudgery of copying faces. Beauty is worthy of the most delicate pencil; but, gracious heaven! why should every periwig-pated fellow, without countenance or character, insist on seeing his chubby cheeks on canvas?

“Could you not give a little expression to that countenance?” said a gentleman to an eminent English painter, who showed him a portrait which he had just finished. “I made that attempt already,” replied the painter; “but what the picture gained in expression, it lost in likeness; and by the time there was a little common sense in the countenance, no-

“body knew for whom it was intended. I
“was obliged, therefore, to make an entire
“new picture, with the face perfectly like,
“and perfectly meaningless, as you see it.”

Let the colours for ever remain, which record the last fainting efforts of Chatham; the expiring triumph of Wolfe; or the indecision of Garrick, equally allured by the two contending Muses! But let them perish and fly from the canvas, which blind self-love spreads for insipidity and ugliness! Why should posterity know, that the first genius of the age, and those whose pencils were formed to speak to the heart, and delineate beautiful Nature, were chiefly employed in copying faces? and many of them, faces that imitate humanity so abominably, that, to use Hamlet's expression, they seem not the genuine work of Nature, but of Nature's journeymen.

To this ridiculous self-love, equally prevalent among the great vulgar and small, some of the best painters in France, Germany, and Great Britain, are obliged for their subsistence. This creates a suspicion, that a taste for the real beauties of painting, is not quite so universal, as a sensibility to their own personal beauties, among the individuals of these countries. And nothing can be a stronger proof of the important light in which men appear in their own eyes, and their small im-

portance in those of others, than the different treatment which the generality of portraits receive, during the life, and after the death, of their constituents. During the first of these periods, they inhabit the finest apartments of the houses to which they belong; they are flattered by the guests, and always viewed with an eye of complacency by the landlord. But, after the commencement of the second, they begin to be neglected; in a short time are ignominiously thrust up to the garret; and, to fill up the measure of their affliction, they finally are thrown out of doors, in the most barbarous manner, without distinction of rank, age, or sex. Those of former times are scattered, like Jews, with their long beards and brown complexions, all over the face of the earth; and, even of the present century, Barons of the most ancient families, armed cap-a-pee, are to be purchased for two or three ducats, in most of the towns of Germany. French Marquises, in full suits of embroidered velvet, may be had at Paris still cheaper; and many worshipful citizens of London are to be seen dangling on the walls of an auction-room, when they are scarce cold in their graves.

LETTER LII.

Rome.

THERE are no theatrical entertainments permitted in this city except during the Carnival; but they are then attended with a degree of ardour unknown in capitals whose inhabitants are under no such restraint. Every kind of amusement, indeed, in this gay season, is followed with the greatest eagerness. The natural gravity of the Roman citizens is changed into a mirthful vivacity; and the serious, sombre city of Rome exceeds Paris itself in sprightliness and gaiety. This spirit seems gradually to augment, from its commencement; and is at its height in the last week of the fix which comprehend the Carnival. The citizens then appear in the streets, masked, in the characters of Harlequins, Pantaloons, Punchinello, and all the fantastic variety of a masquerade. This humour spreads to men, women, and children; descends to the lowest ranks, and becomes universal. Even those who put on no mask, and have no desire to remain unknown, reject their usual clothes, and assume some whimsical dress. The coachmen, who

are placed in a more conspicuous point of view than others of the same rank in life, and who are perfectly known by the carriages they drive, generally affect some ridiculous disguise: Many of them chuse a woman's dress, and have their faces painted, and adorned with patches. However dull these fellows may be, when in breeches, they are, in petticoats, considered as the pleasanter men in the world; and excite much laughter in every street in which they appear. I observed to an Italian of my acquaintance, that, considering the flatness of the joke, I was surprised at the mirth it seemed to raise. "When a whole city," answered he, "are resolved to be merry for a week together, it is exceeding convenient to have a few established jokes ready made; the young laugh at the novelty, and the old from prescription. This metamorphosis of the coachmen is certainly not the most refined kind of wit; however, it is more harmless than the burning of heretics, which formerly was a great source of amusement to our populace."

The street, called the Corso, is the great scene of these masquerades. It is crowded every night with people of all conditions: Those of rank come in coaches, or in open carriages, made on purpose. A kind of civil war is carried on by the company, as they pass each other. The greatest mark of attention you can shew your friends and acquaintance, is, to

throw a handful of little white balls, resembling sugar-plums, full in their faces; and, if they are not deficient in politeness, they will instantly return you the compliment. All who wish to make a figure in the Corso, come well supplied with this kind of ammunition.

Sometimes two or three open carriages, on a side, with five or six persons of both sexes in each, draw up opposite to each other, and fight a pitched battle. On these occasions, the combatants are provided with whole bags full of the small shot above mentioned, which they throw at each other, with much apparent fury, till their ammunition is exhausted, and the field of battle is as white as snow.

The peculiar dresses of every nation of the globe, and of every profession, besides all the fantastic characters usual at masquerades, are to be seen on the Corso. Those of Harlequin and Pantaloon are in great vogue among the men. The citizens wives and daughters generally affect the pomp of women of quality; while their brothers, or other relations, appear as train-bearers and attendants. In general, they seem to delight in characters the most remote from their own. Young people assume the long beard, tottering step, and other concomitants of old age; the aged chuse the bib and rattle of childhood; and the women of quality, and women of the town, appear in the characters of

country maidens, nuns, and vestal virgins. All endeavour to support the assumed characters, to the best of their ability; but none, in my opinion, succeed so well as those who represent children.

Towards the dusk of the evening, the horse-race takes place. As soon as this is announced, the coaches, cabriolets, triumphal cars, and carriages of every kind, are drawn up, and line the street; leaving a space in the middle for the racers to pass. These are five or six horses, trained on purpose for this diversion; they are drawn up a-breast in the Piazza del Popolo, exactly where the Corso begins. Certain balls, with little sharp spikes, are hung along their sides, which serve to spur them on. As soon as they begin to run, those animals, by their impatience to be gone, shew that they understand what is required of them, and that they take as much pleasure as the spectators in the sport. A broad piece of canvas, spread across the entrance of the street, prevents them from starting too soon; the dropping that canvas is the signal for the race to begin. The horses fly off together, and, without riders, exert themselves to the utmost; impelled by emulation, the shouts of the populace, and the spurs above mentioned. They run the whole length of the Corso; and the proprietor of the victor is rewarded by a certain quantity of fine scarlet

or purple cloth, which is always furnished by the Jews.

This diversion, such as it is, seems highly entertaining to the Roman populace; though it appears a mighty foolish business in the eyes of Englishmen. An acquaintance of mine, who had entirely ruined a fine fortune at New-market, told me, that Italian horse-races were the most absurd things in the world; that there were not a hundred guineas lost or won during a whole Carnival; and nothing could be a greater proof of the folly of the people, than their spending their time in such a silly manner.

Masking and horse-races are confined to the last eight days; but there are theatrical entertainments, of various kinds, during the whole six weeks of the Carnival. The Serious Opera is most frequented by people of fashion, who generally take boxes for the whole season. The opera, with which this theatre opened, was received with the highest applause, though the music only was new. The Italians do not think it always necessary to compose new words for what is called a new opera; they often satisfy themselves with new music to the affecting dramas of Metastasio. The audience here seem to lend a more profound and continued attention to the music, than at Venice. This is probably owing to the entertainment being a greater rarity in the one city than in the other.

for I could perceive that the people of fashion, who came every night, began, after the opera had been repeated several nights, to abate in their attention, to receive visitors in their boxes, and to listen only when some favourite airs were singing: whereas the audience in the pit uniformly preserve the most perfect silence, which is only interrupted by gentle murmurs of pleasure from a few individuals, or an universal burst of applause from the whole assembly. I never saw such genuine marks of satisfaction displayed by any assembly, on any occasion whatever. The sensibility of some of the audience gave me an idea of the power of sounds, which the dulness of my own auditory nerves could never have conveyed to my mind. At certain airs, silent enjoyment was expressed in every countenance; at others, the hands were clasped together, the eyes half shut, and the breath drawn in, with a prolonged sigh, as if the soul was expiring in a torrent of delight. One young woman, in the pit, called out, "O Dio, dove sono! che piacer via caccia l'alma?" O God, where am I? what pleasure ravishes my soul!

On the first night of the opera, after one of these favourite airs, an universal shout of applause took place, intermingled with demands that the composer of the music should appear. Il Maestro! il Maestro! resounded from every corner of the house. He was present, and led

the band of music; he was obliged to stand upon the bench, where he continued, bowing to the spectators, till they were tired of applauding him. One person, in the middle of the pit, whom I had remarked displaying great signs of satisfaction from the beginning of the performance, cried out, "He deserves to be made chief musician to the Virgin, and to lead a choir of angels!" This expression would be thought strong, in any country; but it has peculiar energy here, where it is a popular opinion, that the Virgin Mary is very fond, and an excellent judge, of music. I received this information on Christmas morning, when I was looking at two poor Calabrian pipers doing their utmost to please her, and the Infant in her arms. They played for a full hour to one of her images which stands at the corner of a street. All the other statues of the Virgin, which are placed in the streets, are serenaded in the same manner every Christmas morning. On my enquiring into the meaning of that ceremony, I was told the above-mentioned circumstance of her character, which, though you may have always thought highly probable, perhaps you never before knew for certain. My informer was a pilgrim, who stood listening with great devotion to the pipers. He told me, at the same time, that the Virgin's taste was too refined to have much satisfaction in the performance of those poor Calabrians, which was chiefly intended for the Infant; and he desired

me to remark, that the tunes were plain, simple, and such as might naturally be supposed agreeable to the ear of a child of his time of life.

Though the serious opera is in highest estimation, and more regularly attended by people of the first fashion; yet the opera buffas, or burlettas, are not entirely neglected, even by them, and are crowded, every night, by the middle and lower classes. Some admired fingers have performed there during the Carnival, and the musical composers have rendered them highly pleasing to the general taste.

The serious and burlesque operas prevail infinitely over the other theatrical entertainments at Rome, in spite of the united efforts of Harlequin, Pantaloon, and Punchinello.

The prohibition of female performers renders the amusement of the Roman theatre very insipid, in the opinion of some unrefined Englishmen of your acquaintance who are here. In my own poor opinion, the natural sweetness of the female voice is ill supplied by the artificial trills of wretched castratos; and the awkward agility of robust sinewy fellows dressed in women's clothes, is a most deplorable substitution for the graceful movements of elegant female dancers. Is not the horrid practice which is encouraged by this manner of supplying the place of female singers, a greater outrage on re-

ligion and morality, than can be produced by the evils which their prohibition is intended to prevent? Is it possible to believe, that purity of sentiment will be preserved by producing eunuchs on the stage? I should fear it would have a different effect. At the funeral of Junia, the wife of Cassius, and sister of Brutus, the statues of all the great persons connected with her family by blood or alliance, were carried in procession, except those of her brother and husband. This *deficiency* struck the people more than any part of the procession, and brought the two illustrious Romans into their minds with more force than if their statues had been carried with the others.—Præfulgebant Cassius atque Brutus, says Tacitus, eo ipso, quod effigies eorum non visebantur. The memory of Cassius and Brutus made a deeper impression on the minds of the spectators, on this very account, that their statues were *not* seen in the procession.

LETTER LIH.

Naples.

I TAKE the first opportunity of informing you of our arrival in this city. Some of the principal objects which occurred on the road, with the sentiments they suggested to my mind, shall form the subject of this letter.

It is almost impossible to go out of the walls of Rome, without being impressed with melancholy ideas. Having left that city by St. John de Lateran's gate, we soon entered a spacious plain, and drove for several miles in sight of sepulchral monuments and the ruins of ancient aqueducts. Sixtus the Fifth repaired one of them, to bring water into that part of Rome where Dioclesian's baths formerly stood: this water is now called *aqua felice*, from Felix, the name of that pontiff, while he was only a Cordelier. Having changed horses at the Torre de Mezzo Via, so called from an old tower near the post-house, we proceeded through a silent, deserted, unwholesome country. We scarce met a passenger between Rome and Marino, a little town

about twelve miles from the former, which has its name from Caius Marius, who had a villa there; it now belongs to the Colonna family. While fresh horses were harnessing, we visited two churches, to see two pictures which we had heard commended; the subject of one is as disagreeable, as that of the other is difficult to execute. The connoisseur who directed us to these pieces, told me, that the first, the slaying of St. Bartholomew, by Guercino, is in a great style, finely coloured, and the muscles convulsed with pain in the sweetest manner imaginable; he could have gazed at it for ever. "As for the other," added he "which represents the Trinity, it is "natural, well grouped, and easily understood; and that is all that can be said for "it."

From Marino, the road runs for several miles over craggy mountains. In ascending Mons Albanus, we were charmed with a fine view of the country towards the sea; Ostia, Antium, the lake Albano, and the fields adjacent. The form and component parts of this mountain plainly shew, that it has formerly been a volcano. The lake of Nemi, which we left to the right, seems, like that of Albano, to have been formed in the cavity of a crater.

We came next to Veletri, an inconsiderable town, situated on a hill. There is one palace

here, with spacious gardens, which, when kept in repair, may have been magnificent. The stair-case, they assured us, is still worthy of admiration. The inhabitants of Valettri assert, that Augustus was born there. Suetonius says, he was born at Rome. It is certainly of no importance where he was born. Perhaps it would have been better for Rome, and for the world in general, that he never had been born at all. The Valetrians are so fond of emperors, that they claim a connection even with Tiberius and Caligula, who had villas in their neighbourhood. The ruins of Otho's palace are still to be seen about a mile from this city, at a place called Colle Ottone. Of those four emperors, the last-mentioned was by much the best worth the claiming as a countryman. As for Caligula, he was a mischievous madman. Tiberius seems to have been born with wicked dispositions, which he improved by art. Augustus was naturally wicked, and artificially virtuous; and Otho seems to have been exactly the reverse. Though educated in the most vicious of courts, and the favourite and companion of Nero, he still preserved, in some degree, the original excellence of his character; and, at his death, displayed a magnanimity of sentiment, and nobleness of conduct, of which the highly flattered Augustus was never capable. "*Alii diutius imperium tenuerint,*" says Tacitus; "*nemo tam fortiter reliquerit.*" Many have held the em-

pire longer ; none ever relinquished it from more generous motives ! Convinced that, if he continued the contest with Vitellius, all the horrors of a civil war would be prolonged, he determined to sacrifice his life to the quiet of his country, and to the safety of his friends.*
 “ To involve you in fresh calamities,” said this generous prince to the officers who offered still to support his cause, “ is purchasing life
 “ at a price beyond what, in my opinion, is
 “ its value. Shall Roman armies be led a-
 “ gainst each other, and the Roman youth be
 “ excited to mutual slaughter, on my ac-
 “ count ? No ! for your safety, and to pre-
 “ vent such evils, I die contented. Let me
 “ be no impediment to your treating with the
 “ enemy ; nor do you any longer oppose my
 “ fixed resolution. I complain not of my
 “ fate, nor do I accuse any body. To ar-
 “ raigh the conduct of gods or men, is natural
 “ to those only who wish to live.”

* Hunc animum, hanc virtutem vestram, ultra periculis objicere, nimis grande vitæ meæ pretium puto. An ego tantum Romanæ pubis, tot egregios exercitus, sterni rursus et republicâ eripi patiar ? Este superstites, nec diu moremur ; ego incolumitatem vestram, vos constantiam meam. De nemine queror, nam incusare deos vel homines, ejus est, qui vivere velit.

TACIT. Hist. lib. ii.

Though they are not to be compared in other respects, yet the *death* of Otho may vie with that of Cato; and is one of the strongest instances to be found in history, that a life of effeminacy and voluptuousness does not always eradicate the seeds of virtue and benevolence.

In the middle of the square of Veletri, is a bronze statue of Urban the Eighth. I think they told us it is the workmanship of Bernini.

Descending from that town by a rough road, bordered by vineyards and fruit-trees, we traversed an unsalubrious plain to Sermonetta; between which, and the post-house, called Casa Nuova, a little to the left of the highway, are some vaults and ruins, not greatly worthy of the notice of the mere antiquarian. Yet passengers of a singular cast of mind, who feel themselves as much interested in the transactions recorded in the New Testament, as men of taste are in paintings or heathen antiquities, stop a little here to contemplate the *Tres Tabernæ*, which are said to be the three Taverns mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, where the Christian brethren from Rome came to meet St. Paul, when he was on his journey to that city. I have seen, however, some Christian travellers, who, without being connoisseurs, were of opinion, that old ruined houses derived little value from the circumstance above mentioned, and who preferred a

good modern inn to all the antiquities, sacred or profane, that they met with on their grand tours. Without presuming to blame any set of men for their particular taste, I may venture to say, that a traveller, who loves always to see a well-peopled and well-cultivated country, who insists on good eating every day, and a neat comfortable bed every night, would judge very wisely in never travelling out of England.—I am certain he ought not to travel between Rome and Naples; for on this road, especially the part which runs through the Ecclesiastical State, the traveller's chief entertainment must arise from a less substantial foundation; from the ideas formed in the mind, at sight of places celebrated by favourite authors; from a recollection of the important scenes which have been acted there; and even from the thought of treading the same ground, and viewing the same objects, with certain persons who lived there fifteen hundred or two thousand years ago. Strangers, therefore, who come under the first description, whose senses are far more powerful than their fancy, when they are so ill advised as to come so far from home, generally make this journey in very ill humour, fretting at Italian beds, fuming against Italian cooks, and execrating every poor little Italian flea that they meet with on the road. But he who can put up with indifferent fare cheerfully, whose serenity of temper remains unshaken by the assaults of a flea, and

who can draw amusement from the stores of memory and imagination, will find the powers of both wonderfully excited during this journey. Sacred history unites with profane, truth conspires with fable, to afford him entertainment, and render every object interesting.

Proxima Circeæ raduntur littora terræ.

Now by rich Circe's coast they bend their way.

Driving along this road, you have a fine view of Monte Circello, and

—— the *Æzan* bay.
Where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the Day;
Goddess and queen, to whom the powers belong
Of dreadful magic and commanding song.

This abode of the enchantress Circe has been generally described as an island; whereas it is, in reality, a promontory, united to the continent by a neck of land. The adventures of Ulysses and his companions at this place, with all the extraordinary things which Homer has recorded of Circe, must serve to amuse you between *Casa Nuova* and *Piperno*; the road affords no other.

At *Piperno*, anciently *Privernum*, you quit Circe, for Virgil's *Camilla*, a lady of

a very different character, whose native city this is. *

Near to Piperno, an abbey, called Fossa Nuova, is situated on the ruins of the little town of Forum Appii, the same of which mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles, and by Horace, in his account of his journey to Brundisium.

——— Inde Forum Appi
Differtum nautis, cauponibus atque malignis.

To Forum-Appii thence we steer, a place
Stuff'd with rank boatmen, and with vintners base.

FRANCIS.

* Hos super advenit Volscâ de gente Camilla,
Agmen agens equitum et florentes ære catervas,
Bellatrix : Non illa colo calathifve Minervæ
Fœmineas assueta manus ; sed prælia virgo
Dura pati, cursuque pedum prævertere ventos.

ÆNEID. lib. vii.

Last with her martial troops all sheath'd in brass,
Camilla came, a queen of Volscian race ;
Nor were the web or loom the virgin's care,
But arms and coursers, and the toils of war.
She led the rapid race, and left behind
The flagging woods, and pinions of the wind :
Lightly she flies along the level plain,
Nor hurts the tender grass, nor bends the golden grain.

PITT.

The abbey of Fossa Nuova is said to have made a very valuable acquisition of late, no less than the head of St. Thomas Aquinas. We are told, in the memoirs of that Saint, that he was taken ill as he passed this way, and was carried to this convent, where he died. His body was afterward required by the king of France, and ordered to be carried to Thoulouse; but before the remains of this holy person were removed from the convent, one of the monks, unwilling to allow the whole of such a precious deposit to be carried away, determined to retain the most valuable part, and actually cut off the saint's head, substituting another in its stead, which was carried to Thoulouse, very nicely stitched to the body of the saint. The monk, who was guilty of this pious fraud, hid the true head in the wall of the convent, and died without revealing the secret to any mortal. From that time the supposititious head remained unsuspected at Thoulouse; but as impostures are generally detected sooner or later, the venerable brethren of Fossa Nuova (this happened much about the time that the Cock-lanè ghost made such a noise in London) were disturbed with strange knockings and scratchings at a particular part of the wall.—On this noise being frequently repeated, without any visible agent, and the people of the neighbourhood having been often assembled to hear it, the monks at length agreed to pull down part of

the wall at the place where the scratching and knocking were always heard. This was no sooner done, than the true head of St. Thomas Aquinas was found as fresh as the day it was cut off;—on the vessel in which it was contained was the following inscription :

Caput divi Thomæ Aquinatis.

The head of St. Thomas Aquinas.

And near it a paper, containing a faithful narrative of the whole transaction, signed by the monk who did the deed.

Some people, not making a proper allowance for the difference between a saint's head and their own, say, this cannot possibly be the head of Thomas Aquinas, which must have putrified some centuries ago; they say, the paper is written in a character by much too modern; they say, the monks contrived the whole affair, to give an importance to their convent; they say—but what signifies what they say? In this age of incredulity, some people will say any thing.—We next came to Terracina, and here I must finish my letter; in my next I shall carry you to Naples.

LETTER LIV.

Naples.

Terracina, formerly called Anxur, was the capital of the warlike Volsci*. The principal church was originally a temple of Jupiter, who was supposed to have a partiality for this town, and the country around it. Virgil calls him Jupiter Anxurus. Enumerating the troops who came to support the cause of Turnus, he mentions those who plough the Rutulian hills:

*Circeumque jugum; queis Jupiter Anxurus arvis
Præsidet, et viridi gaudens Feronia luco:
Qua saturæ jacet atra palus, &c.*

And the steep hills of Circe stretch around,
Where fair Feronia boasts her stately grove,
And Anxur glories in her guardian Jove;
Where stands the Pontine lake——

PITT.

* Anxur fuit quæ nunc Terracinæ sunt; urbs pro-
ra in paludes.

TIT. LIV. lib. iv.

Near this place we fell in again with the Appian Way, and beheld, with astonishment, the depth of rock that has here been cut, to render it more convenient for passengers. This famous road is a paved causeway, begun in the year of Rome 441, by Appius Claudius Cæcus the Censor, and carried all the way from Rome to Capua. It would be superfluous to insist on the substantial manner in which it was originally made, since it still remains in many places. Though travellers are now obliged to make a circuit by Casa Nuova and Pierno, the Via Appia was originally made in a straight line through the Palude Pontine, or Palus Pomptina, as that vast marsh was anciently called: it is the Ater Palus above mentioned, in the lines quoted from Virgil. That part of the Appian road is now quite impassable, from the augmentation of this noxious marsh, whose exhalations are disagreeable to passengers, and near which it is dangerous to sleep a single night.

Keysser and some others say, that Appius made this road at his own expence. I do not know on what authority they make this assertion; but, whatever their authority may be, the thing is incredible. Could a Roman citizen, at a period when the inhabitants of Rome were not rich, bear an expence which we are surprised that even the State itself could support! Though this famous road has received

its name from Appius, I can hardly imagine it was completed by him. The distance from Rome to Capua is above one hundred and thirty miles; a prodigious length for such a road as this to have been made, during the short course of one Censorship; for a man could be Censor only once in his life. This was an office of very great dignity; no person could enjoy it till he had previously been Consul. It was originally held for five years; but, a hundred years before the time of Appius, the term was abridged to eighteen months. He, however, who, as Livy tells us, possessed all the pride and obstinacy of his family, refused to quit the Censorship at the end of that period; and, in spite of all the efforts of the Tribunes, continued three years and a half beyond the term to which the office had been restricted by the Æmilian Law. But even five years is a very short time for so great a work; yet this was not the only work he carried on during his Censorship. "Viam munivit," says the Historian, "et aquam in urbem duxit." The Appian road was carried on, afterwards, from Capua to Brundisium, and was probably completed so far, in the time of Horace; as appears by this verse, in one of his Epistles addressed to Lollius:

Brundisium Numici melius via ducat, an Appi?

Whether is it best to go by the Numician or Appian way to Brundisium?

Terracina is the last town of the Ecclesiastical, and Fundi the first of the Neapolitan, dominions. This last town stands on a plain, sheltered by hills, which is seldom the case with Italian towns: it probably derives its name from its situation. There is nothing very attractive in this place, now, more than in Horace's time; so we left it as willingly as he did:

Fundos Aufidio Lusco Prætor *libenter*
Linquimus.

We willingly leave Fundi, where Aufidius Luscius is chief magistrate.

Continuing our route, partly on the Ap-
pian way, we came to Mola di Gaeta, a town
built on the ruins of the ancient Formiæ. Ho-
race compliments Ælius Lamia, on his being
descended from the first founder of this city:

Auctore ab illo ducis originem,
Qui Formiarum mœnia dicitur,
Princeps.

From whom the illustrious race arose,
Who first possessed the Formian towers.

FRANCIS.

The same Poet puts the wine, made from the
grapes of the Formian hills, on a footing with
the Falernian:

—mea nec Falernæ
Temperant vites, neque Formiani
Pocula colles.

My cups are neither enriched with the juice of the Falernian grapes, nor that of those from the Formian hills.

Cicero had a villa near this place; and it was on this coast where that great orator was murdered in his litter, as he was endeavouring to make his escape to Greece. The fortress of Gaeta is built on a promontory, about three miles from Mola; but travellers, who have the curiosity to go to the former, generally cross the gulph between the two; and immediately, as the most remarkable thing in the place, they are shewn a great cleft in a rock, and informed that it was miraculously split in this manner at the death of our Saviour. To put this beyond doubt, they shew, at the same time, something like the impression of a man's hand on the rock, of which the following account is given.—A certain person having been told on what occasion the rent took place, struck the palm of his hand on the marble, declaring he could no more believe their story, than that his hand would leave its stamp on the rock; on which, to the terror and confusion of this infidel, the stone yielded like wax, and the impression remains till this day.

Nothing is so injurious to the cause of truth, as attempts to support it by fiction. Many evidences of the justness of this observation occur in the course of a tour through Italy. That mountains were rent at the death of our Saviour, we know from the New Testament; but, as none of them are there particularized, it is presumptuous in others to imagine they can point out what the Evangelists have thought proper to conceal.

This rock, however, is much resorted to by pilgrims; and the Tartanes, and other vessels, often touch there, that the seamen may be provided with little pieces of marble, which they earnestly request may be taken as near the fissure as possible. These they wear constantly in their pockets, in case of shipwreck, from a persuasion, that they are a more certain preservative from drowning, than a cork jacket. Some of these poor people have the misfortune to be drowned, notwithstanding; but the sacred marble loses none of its reputation on that account. Such accidents are always imputed to the weight of the unfortunate person's sins, which have sunk him to the bottom, in spite of all the efforts of the marble to keep him above water; and it is allowed on all hands, that a man so oppressed with iniquity, as to be drowned with a piece of this marble in his pocket, would have sunk much sooner,

if, instead of that, he had had nothing to keep him up but a cork jacket.

Strangers are next led to the Castle, and are shewn, with some other curiosities, the skeleton of the famous Bourbon, Constable of France, who was killed in the service of the emperor Charles the Fifth, as he scaled the walls of Rome.

It is remarkable that France, a nation which values itself so much on an affectionate attachment to its princes, and places loyalty at the head of the virtues, should have produced, in the course of the two last centuries, so many illustrious rebels: Bourbon, Coligni, Guise, Turenne, and the Condés; all of them were, at some period of their lives, in arms against their sovereign.

That it is the duty of subjects to preserve their allegiance, however unjustly and tyrannically their prince may conduct himself, is one of the most debasing and absurd doctrines that ever was obtruded on the understanding of mankind. When Francis forgot the services which the gallant Bourbon had rendered him at Mirignan; when, by repeated acts of oppression, he forgot the duty of a king; Bourbon spurned at his allegiance, as a subject. The Spanish nobleman, who declared that he would pull down his house, if Bourbon should be al-

lowed to lodge in it, either never had heard of the injurious treatment which that gallant soldier had received, or he betrayed the sentiments of a slave, and meant to insinuate his own implicit loyalty to the emperor. Mankind in general have a partiality for princes. The senses are imposed on by the splendour which surrounds them; and the respect due to the office of a king, is naturally converted into an affection for his person: there must therefore be something highly unpopular in the character of the monarch, and highly oppressive in the measures of government, before people can be excited to rebellion. Subjects seldom rise through a desire of attacking, but rather from an impatience of suffering. Where men are under the yoke of feudal lords, who can force them to fight in any cause, it may be otherwise; but when general discontent pervades a free people, and when, in consequence of this, they take arms against their prince, they must have justice on their side. The highest compliment which subjects can pay, and the best service they can render, to a good prince, is, to behave in such a manner, as to convince him that they would rebel against a bad one.

From Mola we were conducted by the Ap-
pian way, over the fertile fields washed by the
silent Liris :

—Rura quæ Liris quieta
Mordet aqua, taciturnus amnis.

—the rich fields that Liris laves,
Where silent roll his deepening waves.

FRANCIS.

This river bounded Latium. On its banks are still seen some ruins of the ancient Minturnæ. After Manlius Torquatus, in what some will call a phrenzy of virtue, had offered up his son as a sacrifice to military discipline; and his colleague Decius, immediately after, devoted himself in a battle against the Latins; the broken army of that people assembled at Minturnæ, and were a second time defeated by Manlius, and their lands divided by the senate among the citizens of Rome. The first battle was fought near Mount Vesuvius, and the second between Sinuessæ and Minturnæ. In the morasses of Minturnæ, Caius Marius, in the seventieth year of his age, was taken, and brought a prisoner to that city, whose magistrates ordered an assassin to put him to death, whom the fierce veteran disarmed with a look. What mortal, says Juvenal, would have been thought more fortunate than Marius, had he breathed out his aspiring soul, surrounded by the captives he had made, his victorious troops, and all the pomp of war, as he descended from his Teutonic chariot, after his triumph over the Cimbri?

—Quid illo cive tulisset
Natura in terris, quid Roma beatus unquam?
Si circumducto captivorum agmine, et omni
Bellorum pompâ, animam exhalâisset opimam,
Cum de Teutonico vellet descendere curru.

Several writers, in their remarks on Italy, observe, that it was on the banks of the Liris that Pyrrhus gained his dear-bought victory over the Romans. They have fallen into this mistake, by confounding the Liris with the Siris, a river in Magna Græcia, near Heraclea; in the neighbourhood of which Pyrrhus defeated the Romans by the means of his elephants.

Leaving Garilagno, which is the modern name of the Liris, we pass the rising ground where the ancient Sinuessâ was situated; the city where Horace met his friends Plotius, Varius, and Virgil. The friendly glow with which this admirable painter has adorned their characters, conveys an amiable idea of his own.

—Animæ, quales neque candidiores
Terra tulit; neque quis me sit devinctior alter.
O, qui complexus et gaudia quanta fuerunt!
Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico.

Pure spirits these; the world no purer knows;
For none my heart with such affection glows.

How oft did we embrace! our joys how great!
 Is there a blessing, in the power of fate,
 To be compared, in sanity of mind,
 To friends of such companionable kind?

FRANCIS.

Do you not share in the happiness of such a company? And are you not rejoiced that they happened to meet near the Ager Falernus, where they could have the best Massic and Falernian wines?

New Capua, through which the road from Rome to Naples lies, is a small town of no importance. The ancient city of that name was situated two miles distant from the new. The ruins of the amphitheatre, which are still to be seen, give some idea of the ancient grandeur of that city. Before the amphitheatre of Vespasian was built, there was none in Rome of equal size with this. Old Capua is said, at one period, to have vied in magnificence with Rome and Carthage:

*Altera dicta olim Carthago, atque altera Roma,
 Nunc prostrata jacet, proprioque sepulta sepulchro.*

Formerly called another Carthage, or another Rome;
 it now lies buried in its own ruins.

The army of Hannibal is said to have been conquered by the luxuries of this place; but the judicious Montesquieu observes, that the

Carthaginian army, enriched by so many victories, would have found a Capua wherever they had gone. Whether Capua brought on the ruin of Hannibal or not, there can be no doubt that Hannibal occasioned the ruin of Capua.

Having broken their connection with Rome, and formed an alliance with her enemy, the Capuans were, in the course of the war, besieged by the Consuls Fulvius and Appius. Hannibal exerted all his vast abilities for the relief of his new friends; but was not able to bring the Roman army to a battle, or to raise the siege. When every other expedient had failed, he marched directly to Rome, in the hopes of drawing the Roman army after him to defend the capital. A number of alarming events conspired, at this time, to depress the spirit of the Roman Senate. The Proconsul Sempronius Gracchus, who commanded an army in Lucania, had fallen into an ambuscade, and was massacred. The two gallant brothers, the Scipios, who were their generals in Spain, had been defeated and killed; and Hannibal was at their gates. How did the Senate behave at this crisis? Did they spend their time in idle harangues and mutual accusations? Did they throw out reflections against those senators who were against entering into a treaty with the Carthaginians till their army should be withdrawn from Italy? Did they recall their army from

Capu? Did they show any mark of despondence? In this state of affairs, the Roman Senate sent orders to Appius to continue the siege of Capua; they ordered a reinforcement to their army in Spain; the troops for that service marching out at one gate of Rome, while Hannibal threatened to enter by storm at another. How could such a people fail to become the masters of the world!

The country between Capua and Naples displays a varied scene of lavish fertility, and with great propriety might be named Campania Felix, if the richest and most generous soil, with the mildest and most agreeable climate, were sufficient to render the inhabitants of a country happy.

LETTER LV.

Naples.

THE day after our arrival at this place, we waited on Sir W—— H——, his Majesty's minister at this court. He had gone early that morning on a hunting party with the King; but the Portuguese ambassador, at L—y H——'s desire, undertook to accompany the D—— on the usual round of visits; Sir W—— was not expected to return for several days, and the laws of etiquette do not allow that important tour to be delayed so long. As we have been continually driving about ever since our arrival, I am already pretty well acquainted with this town, and the environs.

Naples was founded by the Greeks. The charming situation they have chosen, is one proof among thousands, of the fine taste of that ingenious people.

The bay is about thirty miles in circumference, and twelve in diameter; it has been named Crater, from its supposed resemblance to a bowl. This bowl is ornamented with the

most beautiful foliage, with vines ; with olive, mulberry, and orange trees ; with hills, dales, towns, villas, and villages.

At the bottom of the bay of Naples, the town is built in the form of a vast amphitheatre, sloping from the hills towards the sea.

If, from the town, you turn your eyes to the east, you see the rich plains leading to mount Vesuvius, and Portici. If you look to the west, you have the Grotto of Pausilippo, the mountain on which Virgil's tomb is placed, and the fields leading to Puzzoli and the coast of Baia. On the north, are the fertile hills, gradually rising from the shore to the Campagna Felice. On the South, is the bay, confined by the two promontories of Misenum and Minerva, the view being terminated by the islands Procida, Ischia, and Caprea ; and as you ascend to the castle of St. Elmo, you have all these objects under your eye at once, with the addition of a great part of the Campagna.

Independent of its happy situation, Naples is a very beautiful city. The style of architecture, it must be confessed, is inferior to what prevails at Rome ; but though Naples cannot vie with that city in the number of palaces, or in the grandeur and magnificence of the churches, the private houses in general are

better built, and are more uniformly convenient ; the streets are broader and better paved. No street in Rome equals in beauty the Strada di Toledo at Naples ; and still less can any of them be compared with those beautiful streets which are open to the bay. This is the native country of the Zephyrs ; here the excessive heat of the Sun is often tempered with sea breezes, and with gales, wafting the perfumes of the Campagna Felice.

The houses, in general, are five or six stories in height, and flat at the top ; on which are placed, numbers of flower vases or fruit-trees, in boxes of earth, producing a very gay and agreeable effect.

The fortress of St. Elmo is built on a mountain of the same name. The garrison stationed here, have the entire command of the town, and could lay it in ashes at pleasure. A little lower, on the same mountain, is a convent of Carthusians. The situation of this convent is as advantageous and beautiful as can be imagined ; and much expence has been lavished to render the building, the apartments, and the gardens, equal to the situation.

To bestow great sums of money in adorning the retreat of men who have abandoned the world for the express purpose of passing the remainder of their lives in self-denial and mor-

tification, seems to be very ill judged ; and might, on some occasions, counteract the design of their retreat. I expressed this sentiment to a Neapolitan lady at Sir W—— H——'s assembly, the evening after I had visited this convent. She said, "that the elegant apartments, the gardens, and all the expensive ornaments I had particularised, could not much impede a system of self-denial ; for they soon became insipid to those who had them constantly before their eyes, and proved no compensation for the want of other comforts." "In that case," said I, "the whole expence might have been saved, or bestowed in procuring comforts to others who have made no vows of mortification." "Tolga iddio !" God forbid ! cried the lady, forgetting her former argument, "for none have so good a title to every comfortable and pleasant thing in this world, as those who have renounced it, and placed their affections entirely on the next ; instead of depriving these sanctified Carthusians of what they already possess, it would be more meritorious to give them what they have not."

"Give them then, said I, what will afford some satisfaction, instead of the luxuries of sculpture, and painting, and architecture, which, as you say, become so soon insipid ; let them have enjoyments of a different kind. Why should their diet be confined to fish and

“vegetables? Let them enjoy the pleasures of
“the table without any limitation. And since
“they are so very meritorious, why is your
“sex deprived of the happiness of their con-
“versation, and why are they denied the plea-
“sure which the society of women might
“afford them?”

“Cristo benedetto!” blessed Jesus! cried
the lady, “You do not understand this mat-
“ter.——— Though none deserve the plea-
“sures of this world, but those who think only
“on the next; yet none can obtain the joys
“of the next who indulge in the pleasures of
“this.”

“That is unlucky,” said I.

“Unlucky! to be sure it is the most un-
“lucky thing that could have happened, *ecco*
“*dove mi doleva*,” it is that which vexes me,
added the lady.

Though Naples is admirably situated for
commerce, and no kingdom produces the ne-
cessaries and luxuries of life in greater pro-
fusion, yet trade is but in a languishing con-
dition; the best silks come from Lyons, and
the best woollen goods from England.

The chief articles manufactured here, at
present, are, silk stockings, soap, snuff-boxes

of tortoise shells; and of the lava of Mount Vesuvius, tables, and ornamental furniture, of marble.

They are thought to embroider here better than even in France; and their macaroni is preferred to that made in any other part of Italy. The Neapolitans excel also in liqueurs and confections; particularly in one kind of confection, which is sold at a very high price, called Diabolonis. This drug, as you will guess from its name, is of a very hot and stimulating nature, and what I should think by no means requisite to Neapolitan constitutions.

The inhabitants of this town are computed at three hundred and fifty thousand. I make no doubt of their amounting to that number; for though Naples is not one third of the size of London, yet many of the streets here are more crowded than the Strand. In London and Paris, the people who fill the streets are mere passengers, hurrying from place to place on business; and when they choose to converse, or to amuse themselves, they resort to the public walks or gardens: at Naples, the citizens have fewer avocations of business to excite their activity; no public walks, or gardens, to which they can resort; and are, therefore, more frequently seen sauntering and conversing in the streets, where a great proportion

of the poorest sort, for want of habitations, are obliged to spend the night as well as the day. While you sit in your chamber at London, or at Paris, the usual noise you hear from the streets, is that of carriages; but at Naples, where they talk with uncommon vivacity, and where whole streets full of talkers are in continual employment, the noise of carriages is completely drowned in the aggregated clack of human voices. In the midst of all this idleness, fewer riots or outrages of any kind happen, than might be expected in a town where the police is far from being strict, and where such multitudes of poor unemployed people meet together every day. This partly proceeds from the national character of the Italians; which, in my opinion, is quiet, submissive, and averse to riot or sedition; and partly to the common people being universally sober, and never inflamed with strong and spirituous liquors, as they are in the northern countries. Iced water and lemonade are among the luxuries of the lowest vulgar; they are carried about in little barrels, and sold in half-penny's worth. The half naked lazzarone is often tempted to spend the small pittance destined for the maintenance of his family, on this bewitching beverage, as the most dissolute of the low people in London spend their wages on gin and brandy; so that the same extravagance which cools the mob of the one city, tends to inflame that of the other to acts of excess and brutality.

There is not, perhaps, a city in the world, with the same number of inhabitants, in which so few contribute to the wealth of the community by useful, or by productive labour, as Naples; but the numbers of priests, monks, fiddlers, lawyers, nobility, footmen, and lazzaronis, surpass all reasonable proportion; the last alone are computed at thirty or forty thousand. If these poor fellows are idle, it is not their own fault; they are continually running about the streets, as we are told of the artificers of China; offering their service, and begging for employment; and are considered, by many, as of more real utility than any of the classes above mentioned.

L E T T E R LVI.

Naples.

THERE is an assembly once a week at the house of the British minister; no assembly in Naples is more numerous, or more brilliant, than this. Exclusive of that gentleman's good qualities, and those accomplishments which procure esteem in any situation, he would meet with every mark of regard from the Neapolitan nobles, on account of the high favour in which he stands with their Sovereign. Sir W——'s house is open to strangers of every country who come to Naples properly recommended, as well as to the English; he has a private concert almost every evening. L—y H—— understands music perfectly, and performs in such a manner, as to command the admiration even of the Neapolitans. Sir W——, who is the happiest tempered man in the world, and the easiest amused, performs also, and succeeds perfectly in amusing himself, which is a more valuable attainment than the other.

The Neapolitan nobility are excessively fond of splendour and show. This appears in the

brilliancy of their equipages, the number of their attendants, the richness of their dress, and the grandeur of their titles.

I am assured, that the King of Naples counts a hundred persons with the title of Prince, and still a greater number with that of Duke, among his subjects. Six or seven of these have estates, which produce from ten to twelve or thirteen thousand pounds a year; a considerable number have fortunes of about half that value; and the annual revenue of many is not above one or two thousand pounds. With respect to the inferior orders of nobility, they are much poorer; many Counts and Marquisses have not above three or four hundred pounds a year of paternal estate, many still less, and not a few enjoy the title without any estate whatever.

When we consider the magnificence of their entertainments, the splendour of their equipages, and the number of their servants, we are surpris'd that the richest of them can support such expensive establishments. I dined, soon after our arrival, at the Prince of Franca Villa's; there were about forty people at table; it was meagre day; the dinner consisted entirely of fish and vegetables, and was the most magnificent entertainment I ever saw, comprehending an infinite variety of dishes, a vast profusion of fruit, and the wines of every

country in Europe. I dined since at the Prince Iacci's. I shall mention two circumstances, from which you may form an idea of the grandeur of an Italian palace, and the number of domestics which some of the nobility retain. We passed through twelve or thirteen large rooms before we arrived at the dining room; there were thirty-six persons at table, none served but the Prince's domestics, and each guest had a footman behind his chair; other domestics belonging to the Prince remained in the adjacent rooms, and in the hall. We afterwards passed through a considerable number of other rooms in our way to one from which there is a very commanding view.

No estate in England could support a number of servants, paid and fed as English servants are; but here the wages are very moderate indeed, and the greater number of men servants, belonging to the first families, give their attendance through the day only, and find beds and provisions for themselves. It must be remembered, also, that few of the nobles give entertainments, and those who do not, are said to live very sparingly; so that the whole of their revenue, whatever that may be, is exhausted on articles of show.

As there is no Opera at present, the people of fashion generally pass part of the evening at the Corso, on the sea-shore. This is the great

scene of Neapolitan splendour and parade ; and, on grand occasions, the magnificence displayed here will strike a stranger very much. The finest carriages are painted, gilt, varnished, and lined, in a richer and more beautiful manner, than has yet become fashionable either in England or France ; they are often drawn by six, and sometimes by eight horses. As the last is the number allotted to his Britannic Majesty when he goes to parliament, some of our countrymen are offended that any individuals whatsoever should presume to drive with the same number.

It is the mode here, to have two running footmen, very gaily dressed, before the carriage, and three or four servants in rich liveries behind ; these attendants are generally the handsomest young men that can be procured. The ladies or gentlemen within the coaches, glitter in all the brilliancy of lace, embroidery, and jewels. The Neapolitan carriages, for gala days, are made on purpose, with very large windows, that the spectators may enjoy a full view of the parties within. Nothing can be more showy than the harness of the horses ; their heads and manes are ornamented with the rarest plumage, and their tails set off with ribands and artificial flowers, in such a graceful manner, that you are apt to think they have been adorned by the same hands that dressed the heads of the ladies, and not by common grooms.

After all, you will perhaps imagine the amusement cannot be very great. The carriages follow each other in two lines, moving in opposite directions. The company within smile, and bow, and wave the hand, as they pass and repass their acquaintance; and doubtless imagine, that they are the most important figures in the procession. The horses, however, seem to be quite of a different way of thinking, and to consider themselves as the chief objects of admiration, looking on the livery servants, the volants, the lords, and the ladies, as their natural suite on all such solemn occasions.

LETTER LVII.

Naples.

THE greatest part of kings, whatever may be thought of them after their death, have the good fortune to be represented, at some period of their lives, generally at the beginning of their reigns, as the greatest and most virtuous of mankind. They are never compared to characters of less dignity than Solomon, Alexander, Cæsar, or Titus; and the comparison usually concludes to the advantage of the living monarch. They differ in this, as in many other particulars, from those of the most distinguished genius and exalted merit among their subjects, That the fame of the latter, if any awaits them, seldom arrives at its meridian till many years after their death; whereas the glory of the former is at its fullest splendour during their lives; and most of them have the satisfaction of hearing all their praises with their own ears. Each particular monarch, taken separately, is, or has been, considered as a star of great lustre; yet any number of them, taken without selection, and placed in the historical galaxy, add little to its brightness,

and are often contemplated with disgust. When we have occasion to mention kings in general, the expression certainly does not awaken a recollection of the most amiable or most deserving part of the human species; and tyranny in no country is pushed so far, as to constrain men to speak of them, when we speak in general terms, as if they were. It would revolt the feelings, and rouse the indignation, even of slaves. Full freedom is allowed therefore on this topic; and, under the most arbitrary government, if you chuse to declaim on the imbecility, profligacy, or corruption of human nature, you may draw your illustrations from the kings of any country, provided you take them in groupes, and hint nothing to the detriment of the reigning monarch. But, when we talk of any one living sovereign, we should never allow it to escape from our memory, that he is wise, valiant, generous, and good; and we ought always to have Solomon, Alexander, Cæsar, and Titus, at our elbow, to introduce them apropos when occasion offers. We may have what opinion we please of the whole race of Bourbon; but it would be highly indecent to deny, that the reigning kings of Spain and Naples are very great princes. As I never had the happiness of seeing the father, I can only speak of the son. His Neapolitan Majesty seems to be about the age of six or seven-and-twenty. He is a prince of great activity of body, and a good constitution; he indulges in

frequent relaxations from the cares of government and the fatigue of thinking, by hunting and other exercises; and (which ought to give a high idea of his natural talents) he never fails to acquire a very considerable degree of perfection in those things to which he applies. He is very fond, like the King of Prussia, of reviewing his troops, and is perfectly master of the whole mystery of the manual exercise. I have had the honour, oftener than once, of seeing him exercise the different regiments which form the garrison here: he always gave the word of command with his own royal mouth, and with a precision which seemed to astonish the whole Court. This monarch is also a very excellent shot; his uncommon success at this diversion is thought to have roused the jealousy of his Most Catholic Majesty, who also values himself on his skill as a marksman. The correspondence between those two great personages often relates to their favourite amusement.—A gentleman, who came lately from Madrid, told me, that the King, on some occasion, had read a letter which he had just received from his son at Naples, wherein he complained of his bad success on a shooting party, having killed no more than eighty birds in a day: and the Spanish monarch, turning to his courtiers, said, in a plaintive tone of voice, “Mio filio piange
“di non aver’ fatto piu di ottante beccacie in
“uno giorno, quando mi crederi l’uomo il piu

“felice del mondo se potesse fare quaranta.” My son laments, that he has not killed more than eighty birds in one day, whereas, I should think myself the happiest man in the world, if I could kill forty. All who take a becoming share in the afflictions of a royal bosom, will no doubt join with me, in wishing better success to this good monarch, for the future. Fortunate would it be for mankind, if the happiness of their princes could be purchased at so easy a rate! and thrice fortunate for the generous people of Spain, if the family connexions of their monarch, often at variance with the real interest of that country, should never seduce him into a more ruinous war, than that which he now wages against the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. His Neapolitan Majesty, as I am informed, possesses many other accomplishments; I particularise those only to which I have myself been a witness. No king in Europe is supposed to understand the game of billiards better. I had the pleasure of seeing him strike the most brilliant stroke that perhaps ever was struck by a crowned head. The ball of his antagonist was near one of the middle pockets, and his own in such a situation, that was absolutely necessary to make it rebound from two different parts of the cushion, before it could pocket the other. A person of less enterprise would have been contented with placing himself in a safe situation, at a small loss, and never have risked

any offensive attempt against the enemy; but the difficulty and danger, instead of intimidating, seemed rather to animate the ambition of this Prince. He summoned all his address; he estimated, with a mathematical eye, the angles at which the ball must fly off; and he struck it with an undaunted mind and a steady hand. It rebounded obliquely, from the opposite side-cushion, to that at the end; from which it moved in a direct line towards the middle pocket, which seemed to stand in gaping expectation to receive it. The hearts of the spectators beat thick as it rolled along; and they shewed, by the contortions of their faces and persons, how much they feared that it should move one hair-breadth in a wrong direction.—I must here interrupt this important narrative, to observe, that, when I talk of contortions, if you form any thing of that kind which you may have seen around an English billiard-table or bowling-green, you can have no just notion of those which were exhibited on this occasion: your imagination must triple the force and energy of every English grimace, before it can do justice to the nervous twist of an Italian countenance.—At length the royal ball reached that of the enemy, and with a single blow drove it off the plain. An universal shout of joy, triumph, and applause burst from the beholders; but

O thoughtless mortals, ever blind to fate,
Too soon dejected, and too soon elate!

the victorious ball, pursuing the enemy too far, shared the same fate, and was buried in the same grave, with the vanquished. This fatal and unforeseen event seemed to make a deep impression on the minds of all who were witnesses to it; and will no doubt be recorded in the annals of the present reign, and quoted by future poets and historians, as a striking instance of the instability of sublunary felicity.

It is imagined that the cabinet of this Court is entirely guided by that of Spain; which, on its part, is thought to be greatly under the influence of French counsels. The manners, as well as the politics, of France, are said to prevail at present at the Court of Madrid. I do not presume to say of what nature the politics of his Neapolitan Majesty are, or whether he is fond of French counsels or not; but no true-born Englishman existing can shew a more perfect contempt of their manners than he does. In domestic life, this Prince is generally allowed to be an easy master, and a good-natured husband, a dutiful son, and an indulgent father.

The Queen of Naples is a beautiful woman, and seems to possess the affability, good-humour, and benevolence, which distinguish, in such an amiable manner, the Austrian family.

L E T T E R LVIII.

Naples.

THE hereditary jurisdiction of the nobles over their vassals subsists, both in the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, in the full rigour of the feudal government. The peasants therefore are poor; and it depends entirely on the personal character of the masters, whether their poverty is not the least of their grievances. If the land was leased out to free farmers, whose property was perfectly secure, and the leases of a sufficient length to allow the tenant to reap the fruits of his own improvements, there is no manner of doubt that the estates of the nobility would produce much more. The landlord might have a higher rent paid in money, instead of being collected in kind, which subjects him to the salaries and impositions of a numerous train of stewards; and the tenants, on their parts, would be enabled to live much more comfortably, and to lay up every year, a small pittance for their families. But the love of domineering is so predominant in the breasts of men who have been accustomed to it from their infancy, that, if the alternative were in

their choice, many of them would rather submit to be themselves slaves to the caprices of an absolute prince, than become perfectly independent, on the condition of giving independence to their vassals. There is reason to believe that this ungenerous spirit prevails pretty universally among the nobility all over Europe. The German Barons are more shocked at the idea of their peasants becoming perfectly free, like the farmers of Great Britain, than they are solicitous to limit the power of their princes: And, from the sentiments I have heard expressed by the French, I very much doubt, whether their high nobility would accept of the privileges of English peers, at the expence of that insolent superiority, and those licentious freedoms, with which *they* may, though no English peer can, treat with impunity the citizens and people of inferior rank. We need be the less surpris'd at this, when we consider that, in some parts of the British empire, where the equable and generous laws of England prevail, those who set the highest value on freedom, who submit to every hardship, and encounter every danger, to secure it to themselves, never have shewn a disposition of extending its blessings, or even alleviating the bondage of that part of the human species, which a sordid and unjustifiable barter has brought into their power.

The Court of Naples has not yet ventured, by one open act of authority, to abolish the im-

moderate power of the lords over their tenants. But it is believed that the Minister secretly wishes for its destruction; and in cases of flagrant oppression, when complaints are brought before the legal courts, or directly to the King himself, by the peasants against their lord, it is generally remarked that the Minister favours the complainant. Notwithstanding this, the masters have so many opportunities of oppressing, and such various methods of teasing, their vassals, that they generally chuse to bear their wrongs in silence; and perceiving that those who hold their lands immediately from the Crown, are in a much easier situation than themselves, without raising their hopes to perfect freedom, the height of their wishes is to be sheltered, from the vexations of little tyrants, under the unlimited power of one common master. The objects of royal attention, they fondly imagine, are too sublime, and the minds of kings too generous, to stoop to, or even to countenance, in their servants, the minute and unreasonable exertions, which are wrung at present from the hard hands of the exhausted labourer.

Though the Neapolitan nobility still retain the ancient feudal authority over the peasants, yet their personal importance depends, in a great measure, on the favour of the King; who, under pretext of any offence, can confine them to their own estates, or imprison them at plea-

sure; and who, without any alleged offence, and without going to such extremes, can inflict a punishment, highly sensible to them, by not inviting them to the amusements of the Court, or not receiving them with smiles when they attend on any ordinary occasion. Unless this Prince were so very impolitic as to disgust all the nobility at once, and so unite the whole body against him, he has little to fear from their resentment. Even in case of such an union, as the nobles have lost the affection and attachment of their peasants, what could they do in opposition to a standing army of thirty thousand men, entirely devoted to the Crown? The establishment of standing armies has universally given stability to the power of the prince, and ruined that of the great lords. No nobility in Europe can now be said to inherit political importance, or to act independent of, or in opposition to, the influence of the crown; except the *temporal peers of that part of Great Britain called England.*

As men of high birth are seldom, in this country, called to the management of public affairs, or placed in those situations where great political knowledge is required; and as his Majesty relies on his own talents and experience in war for the direction of the army; neither the civil nor military establishments open any very tempting field for the ambition of the nobles, whose education is usually adapted to

the parts in life which they have a probability of acting. Their fortunes and titles descend to them, independent of any effort of their own. All the literary distinctions are beneath their regard; it is therefore not thought expedient to cloud the playful innocence of their childhood, or the amiable gaiety of their youth, with severe study. In some other countries, where a very small portion of literary education is thought becoming for young men of rank, and where even this small portion has been neglected, they sometimes catch a little knowledge of history and mythology, and some useful moral sentiments, from the excellent dramatic pieces that are represented on their theatres. They also sometimes pick up some notion of the different governments in Europe, and a few political ideas, in the course of their travels. But the nobility of this country very seldom travel; and the only dramatic pieces, represented here, are operas; in which music, not sentiment, is the principal thing attended to. In the other theatrical entertainments, *Punchinello* is the shining character. To this disregard of literature among the nobles, it is owing, that in their body are to be found few tiresome, scholastic pedants, and none of those perturbed spirits, who ruffle the serenity of nations by political alarms, who clog the wheels of government by opposition, who pry into the conduct of ministers, or in any way disturb that total indifference with regard to the public, which pre-

vails all over the kingdom. We are told by a great modern Historian*, that "force of mind, "a sense of personal dignity, gallantry in enterprise, invincible perseverance in execution, contempt of danger and of death, are the "characteristic virtues of uncivilised nations." But as the nobles of this country have long been sufficiently civilised, these qualities may in them be supposed to have given place to the arts which embellish a polished age; to gaming, gallantry, music, the parade of equipage, the refinements of dress, and other nameless refinements.

* Vide Dr. Robertson's History of the Emperor Charles V. Sect. I.

LETTER LIX.

Naples.

THE citizens of Naples form a society of their own, perfectly distinct from the nobility; and although they are not the most industrious people in the world, yet, having some degree of occupation, and their time being divided between business and pleasure, they probably have more enjoyment than those, who, without internal resources, or opportunities of active exertion, pass their lives in sensual gratifications, and in waiting the returns of appetite around a gaming table. In the most respectable class of citizens, are comprehended the lawyers, of whom there are an incredible number in this town. The most eminent of this profession hold, indeed, a kind of intermediate rank between the nobility and citizens; the rest are on a level with the physicians, the principal merchants, and the artists; none of whom can make great fortunes, however industrious they may be; but a moderate income enables them to support their rank in society, and to enjoy all the conveniences, and many of the luxuries, of life.

England is perhaps the only nation in Europe where some individuals, of every profession, even of the lowest, find it possible to accumulate great fortunes; the effect of this very frequently is, that the son despises the profession of the father, commences gentleman, and dissipates, in a few years, what cost a life to gather. In the principal cities of Germany and Italy, we find, that the ancestors of many of those citizens who are the most eminent in their particular businesses, have transmitted the art to them through several generations. It is natural to imagine, that this will tend to the improvement of the art, or science, or profession, as well as the family fortune; and that the third generation will acquire knowledge from the experience, as well as wealth from the industry, of the former two; whereas, in the cases alluded to above, the wheel of fortune moves differently. A man, by assiduity in a particular business, and by genius, acquires a great fortune and a high reputation; the son throws away the fortune, and ruins his own character by extravagance; and the grandson is obliged to recommence the business, unaided by the wealth or experience of his ancestors. This, however, is pointing out an evil which I should be sorry to see remedied; because it certainly originates in the riches and prosperity of the country in which it exists.

The number of priests, monks, and ecclesiastics of all the various orders that swarm in this city, is prodigious; and the provision appropriated for their use, is as ample. I am assured, that the clergy are in possession of considerably above one-third of the whole kingdom, over and above what some particular orders among them acquire by begging for the use of their convents, and what is gotten in legacies by the address and assiduity of the whole. The unproductive wealth, which is lodged in the churches and convents of this city, amounts also to an amazing value. Not to be compared in point of architecture to the churches and convents of Rome, those of Naples surpass them in riches, in the value of their jewels, and in the quantity of silver and golden crucifixes, vessels, and implements of various kinds. I have often heard these estimated at a sum so enormous as to surpass all credibility; and which, as I have no opportunity of ascertaining with any degree of precision, I shall not mention. This wealth, whatever it amounts to, is of as little use to the kingdom, as if it still remained in the mines of Peru; and the greater part of it, surely, affords as little comfort to the clergy and monks as to any other part of the community; for though it belongs to their church, or their convent, yet it can no more be converted to the use of the priests and monks of such churches and convents, than to the tradesmen

who inhabit the adjacent streets. For this reason I am a good deal surpris'd, that no pretext, or subterfuge, has been found, no expedient fallen on, no treaty or convention made, for appropriating part of this at least, to the use of some set of people or other. If the clergy were to lay their hands on it, this might be found fault with by the King; if his Majesty dreamt of taking any part of it for the exigencies of the state, the clergy would undoubtedly raise a clamour; and if both united, the Pope would think he had a right to pronounce his *veto*: but if all these three powers could come to an understanding, and settle their proportions, I am apt to think a partition might be made as quietly as that of Poland.

Whatever scruples the Neapolitan clergy may have to such a project, they certainly have none to the full enjoyment of their revenues. No class of men can be less disposed to offend Providence by a peevish neglect of the good things which the bounty of heaven has bestowed. Self-denial is a virtue, which I will not say they possess in a smaller degree, but which, I am sure, they affect less than any other ecclesiastics I know; they live very much in society, both with the nobles and citizens. All of them, the monks not excepted, attend the theatre, and seem to join most cordially in other diversions and amusements; the common

people are no ways offended at this, or imagine that they ought to live in a more recluse manner. Some of the orders have had the address to make a concern for their temporal interest, and a desire of seeing them live full, and in something of a jolly manner, be regarded by the common people as a proof of zeal for religion. I am informed, that a very considerable diminution in the number of monks has taken place in the kingdom of Naples since the suppression of the Jesuits, and since a liberty of quitting the cowl was granted by the late Pope; but still there is no reason to complain of a deficiency in this order of men. The richest and most commodious convents in Europe, both for male and female votaries, are in this city; the most fertile and beautiful hills of the environs are covered with them; a small part of their revenue is spent in feeding the poor, the monks distributing bread and soup to a certain number every day before the doors of the convents. Some of the friars study physic and surgery, and practise these arts with great applause. Each convent has an apothecary's shop belonging to it, where medicines are delivered gratis to the poor, and sold to those who can afford to pay. On all these accounts the monks in general are greater favourites with the common people than even the secular clergy; all the charity of the friars, however, would not be able to cover their sins, if the stories circulated by their enemies were

true,—by which they are represented as the greatest profligates and debauchees in the world. Without giving credit to all that is reported on this subject, as the Neapolitan monks are very well fed, as this climate is not the most favourable to continency (a virtue which in this place is by no means estimated in proportion to its rarity), it is most likely that the inhabitants of the convents, like the inhabitants in general, indulge in certain pleasures with less scruple or restraint than is usual in some other places. Be that as it may, it is certain that they are the most superstitious of mankind; a turn of mind which they communicate with equal zeal and success to a people remarkably ignorant, and remarkably amorous. The seeds of superstition thus zealously sown on such a warm and fertile, though uncultivated, soil, sometimes produce the most extraordinary crops of sensuality and devotion that ever were seen in any country.

The lazzaroni, or black-guards, as has been already observed, form a considerable part of the inhabitants of Naples; and have, on some well-known occasions, had the government for a short time in their own hands. They are computed at above thirty thousand; the greater part of them have no dwelling-houses, but sleep every night under porticos, piazzas, or any kind of shelter they can find.

Those of them who have wives and children, live in the suburbs of Naples near Paufilippo, in huts, or in caverns or chambers dug out of that mountain. Some gain a livelihood by fishing, others by carrying burdens to and from the shipping; many walk about the streets ready to run on errands, or to perform any labour in their power for a very small recompence. As they do not meet with constant employment, their wages are not sufficient for their maintenance; the soup and bread distributed at the door of the convents supply the deficiency. The lazzaroni are generally represented as a lazy, licentious, and turbulent set of people; what I have observed gives me a very different idea of their character. Their idleness is evidently the effect of necessity, not of choice; they are always ready to perform any work, however laborious, for a very reasonable gratification. It must proceed from the fault of Government, when such a number of stout active citizens remain unemployed; and so far are they from being licentious and turbulent, that I cannot help thinking they are by much too tame and submissive. Though the inhabitants of the Italian cities were the first who shook off the feudal yoke, and though in Naples they have long enjoyed the privilege of municipal jurisdiction, yet the external splendour of the nobles, and the authority they still exercise over the peasants, impose upon the minds of the lazzaroni; and

however bold and resentful they may be of injuries offered by others, they bear the insolence of the nobility as passively as peasants fixed to the soil. A coxcomb of a volanti tricked out in his fantastical dress, or any of the liveried slaves of the great, make no ceremony of treating these poor fellows with all the insolence and insensibility natural to their masters; and for no visible reason, but because he is dressed in lace, and the others in rags. Instead of calling to them to make way, when the noise in the streets prevents the common people from hearing the approach of the carriage, a stroke across the shoulders with the cane of the running footman, is the usual warning they receive. Nothing animates this people to insurrection, but some very pressing and very universal cause; such as a scarcity of bread: every other grievance they bear as if it were their charter. When we consider thirty thousand human creatures without beds or habitations, wandering almost naked in search of food through the streets of a well built city; when we think of the opportunities they have of being together, of comparing their own destitute situation with the affluence of others, one cannot help being astonished at their patience.

Let the prince be distinguished by splendour and magnificence; let the great and the rich

have their luxuries; but, in the name of humanity, let the poor, who are willing to labour, have food in abundance to satisfy the cravings of nature, and raiment to defend them from the inclemencies of the weather!

If their governors, whether from weakness or neglect, do not supply them with these, they certainly have a right to help themselves.— Every law of equity and common sense will justify them, in revolting against such governors, and in satisfying their own wants from the superfluities of lazy luxury.

END OF VOL. II.

